



the value of the informant method for studying drinking habits

by Carolyn B. Liban and
Reginald G. Smart



Addiction Research Foundation
Toronto, Canada



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INTRODUCTION

1. The Rationale for Studying Drinking Habits Using the Informant Method

Studies of drinking habits are central to any effort to control drinking or drinking problems. There is a need for cheap, accurate and practical methods for studying drinking. This study is essentially methodological and designed to improve methods of examining drinking habits.

The purposes of the study were to: (i) assess modes of alcohol consumption, drinking practices, and attitudes toward drinking in the Regional Municipality of Durham, using the Jellinek informant method; (ii) compare the results of the informant method with those obtained by a standard household survey conducted in the same region during 1978; (iii) compare the results of both methods with estimates of per capita alcohol consumption based on sales data of alcoholic beverages for the region; and (iv) examine the feasibility of the informant method, its difficulties, costs and problems. An additional purpose of the study, reported in detail elsewhere (Smart et al., 1980) was to try out the feasibility of the method in several countries (i.e. Mexico, Honduras and Canada) and to determine whether it could be a low cost substitute for household surveys.

2. Drinking Patterns in Ontario

Drinking patterns in Ontario have changed considerably over the last couple of decades. Where once the majority of drinkers were men and the most popular beverages were beer, rye and domestic fortified wines, changes in availability of alcohol, economic factors, and demographic factors have

diversified drinking habits in the Province.

Both the proportion of adults who drink and the rate of per capita consumption have increased substantially between 1950 and 1975 (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979). The most recent surveys of the Ontario adult population (Gillies, 1975; Smart and Goodstadt, 1976) indicate that approximately 80% of respondents 18 years of age or older are drinkers, and that over half of consumers drink at least once a week but daily drinking is less typical. One factor contributing to the larger proportion of drinkers over the years is the change in the composition of drinking groups; women are drinking in greater numbers and in greater quantities, and drinking on the part of teenagers has increased. Furthermore, new immigrants represent a new group of drinkers bringing with them their own tastes and drinking patterns (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979). In general, drinking is most common among males, younger adults, and those in professional, managerial or executive occupations, full-time employees, persons from the higher socio-economic status, the higher educated, and persons with no religious affiliation (Gillies, 1975; Smart and Goodstadt, 1976). Whereas an abstainer tends to be "an elderly person of low income, often female, a member of a fundamentalist Protestant denomination, and not well educated" (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979). The northern remote areas of the Province report the highest rates of drinking, and there is generally a lack of variation in drinking rates among regions in southern Ontario (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979; Smart and Goodstadt, 1976). Changes in per adult consumption were most notable toward the end of the 1950 - 1975 period; by 1975 consumption per person aged 15 and older was 11.61 litres of absolute alcohol (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979).

Most consumption is in the form of beer, with spirits second most common, and wine third. Although consumption of beer and rye, the traditional beverages, have continued to increase at a moderate rate over the past years, there has been a distinct trend toward the consumption of imported wines and spirits other than rye, such as rum and vodka (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979).

In Ontario, alcohol is predominantly integrated with recreational and social activities, rather than serving a nutritional function. Although most drinking occurs in private, such as in homes (Smart and Goodstadt, 1976), there is a great deal of evidence that drinking is rarely an isolated activity in that: approximately one-third of those who drink during the week do so at a party; most drinking occurs during the evening and on week-ends; and during the Christmas and New Year holiday seasons, sales of beer, wine and spirits increase above their normal rate (Single and Giesbrecht, 1979).

In summary, drinking patterns in Ontario are characterized by heterogeneity of drinking groups, integration of alcohol with social activities, a large proportion of drinkers among youth, women and the less advantaged socio-economic groups, availability of many occasions and licensed establishments for drinking and a decrease in the past differences between rural and urban drinking patterns. Although much is known about the amounts of alcohol drunk and the types of drinkers in Ontario less is known of the values and attitudes concerning drinking. Large scale studies in these areas have not been made and much of our information about values must be inferred from other information about drinking patterns. The informant method is used here, in part, to gather information about drinking-related values and attitudes as well as drinking patterns.

3. Trials of the Informant Method

Briefly, the informant method involves having carefully chosen informants tell about drinking habits in their representative group. Trials of the method have been documented for at least six countries, three of which have been assembled by Popham (1976), and three have been summarized by Smart et al. (1980). Each of the trials demonstrates at least one of the many useful features of the method, such as the ability to generate valid and reliable data, as a tool for cross-cultural comparisons, and the adaptability to regions and populations where standard survey methods are unfeasible.

The report from Finland (Pernanen, 1976) integrated the data generated by the informant method with that from previous studies of drinking and drinking habits in an attempt to create a comprehensive picture of Finnish drinking behavior. Results of the informant method were generally found to corroborate those previously obtained and, in many cases, enhanced existing knowledge by providing interesting information on socio-economic and regional variations. Similarly, the report from Belgium (Hebbelinck and Prové, 1976) found that data obtained by the informant method were generally in agreement with results from a previous survey.

The report from France (Ledermann and Toinet, 1976) demonstrates the usefulness of the method for comparing habitual modes of alcohol consumption and attitudes between various countries. The results of the comparison between France and Finland illustrated fundamental cultural differences in alcohol use and attitudes toward alcohol.

The trials in Mexico (Natera et al., 1979) and Honduras (Bonilla et al., 1979) demonstrate the adaptability of the method to rural and underdeveloped

regions, and the appeal to countries where standard survey methods would require elaborate and costly preparation (e.g. census taking, etc.) subsequent to the actual implementation of the survey. Furthermore, the informant method is flexible enough to take into account local habits, such as the production of unregistered alcoholic beverages, which are widespread in Latin American countries in addition to others.

The present report describes the use of the informant method in the Regional Municipality of Durham, an area near Toronto, chosen because of its similarity in many demographic respects to the Province of Ontario as a whole. The trial in Durham is unique in that a standard household survey had recently been conducted in the region, and several questions about drinking habits used in this survey were comparable to those included in the informant method questionnaire. Thus, the trial in Durham enabled a direct comparison to be made of the same information about drinking patterns obtained by two different methods.

4. Background for Methodological Aspects

Drinking and drinking-related problems among the general public have been well documented in many countries, and indicate that both are widespread (Cahalan, 1970; Edwards et al., 1972). The most common method for investigating patterns of alcohol use and the prevalence of problem drinking in industrialized countries is the standard survey method. However, there are several problems associated with surveys of drinking in the general population, the most notable being the accuracy of the survey methods, the costs involved in implementing the survey, and the relatively large amount of census and population information

necessary to plan the survey.

A recurrent problem in assessing the nature and extent of drinking among the general population has been the ability to achieve accurate measurement of alcohol consumption. Most surveys of general populations generate estimates of consumption which account for only 40% to 60% of the known sales of alcoholic beverages (see Pernanen, 1974, for a review). Poor coverage has been attributed to non-response and poor sampling methods, but mainly to selective reporting and forgetting. Furthermore, heavy drinkers are most likely to forget or selectively under-report their alcohol consumption (Makela, 1971; Popham, 1970). Methods for increasing the accuracy of surveys have not been developed, however, there are suggestions in the literature that methods which depend upon selected individuals reporting on the practices of groups well known to them yield more accurate consumption data than that obtained from individuals describing their own behavior. For example, surveys of cigarette smoking using standard survey methods have found that only 60% to 70% of cigarettes purchased were accounted for (Pernanen, 1974). However a much better account of cigarette consumption was achieved in Finland (94.3%) when a single informant, typically the housewife, gave information about cigarette purchases for her household (Makela 1971). If selective reporting, especially by heavy alcohol consumers, is the major factor in poor accountability of alcohol consumption, then use of an informant method would be expected to give more accurate results than standard survey techniques.

Implementation of the standard survey method entails relatively high costs, currently between \$60 to \$100 an interview, depending on the amount of travel involved. For example, the household survey of alcohol use in the

Regional Municipality of Durham conducted in 1978 (Gillies, 1978) cost approximately \$80 per interview. On the other hand, the total cost of the survey in Finland in 1956, utilizing the informant method (Popham, 1976) was only \$1,000 at a time when standard survey costs would have been about \$20 to \$30 per interview, or \$20,000 to \$30,000 for 1,000 interviews. Thus the informant method affords a major reduction in operational costs over that of the standard interview method.

The informant method also has an advantage over the standard survey method in that the detailed census and demographic information required to design household surveys is not necessary, although information about the occupational distribution is needed to facilitate large occupational groupings which would reflect both the major socio-economic class differences and the urban-rural differences of the population under study. One problem resulting from the detailed census information on a block-by-block basis concerning households, streets, and population required by household surveys is that in many developing countries and isolated parts of Canada, census data of this sort does not exist and hence surveys cannot easily be done (Gonzalez and Katatsky, 1978). For example, in Mexican towns and villages streets do not have names and no census maps exist providing at least the location of buildings; surveys conducted in such areas require that a census be done first, thus adding greatly to the overall costs. Consequently, unless a large amount of mapping and census taking is first completed, surveys in such areas are unfeasible. Because of this particular difficulty inherent to the design and implementation of the standard survey method, the informant method may prove to be more practical in developing countries and in isolated northern areas of Canada.

Of interest to many in the field of alcohol research are cross-cultural comparisons of modes of alcohol consumption, and attitudes and customs toward drinking. Use of the International Survey of Drinking Customs (ISDC) questionnaire, the standardized questionnaire designed for use in the informant method, allows such comparisons to be made between different populations and various countries whereby both the method and the subject areas surveyed are standardized.

5. Description of the Informant Method

The informant method is essentially an exploratory tool designed mainly to describe the overall drinking patterns of a particular culture or group and to document customs and attitudes which could foster excessive use of alcohol, or, on the other hand, restrain it. The approach entails having selected individuals report on the drinking practices of groups familiar to them rather than having an individual in a sample report on his or her own drinking behavior as in typical survey methods. The informant in this case is not personally involved when he describes the behavior of the group nor does he disclose anything about himself.

The use of informants was originally designed by anthropologists for use with small, non-literate populations. It has since been modified for use in large, literate societies, in which case a relatively larger number of informants are necessary to ensure a representative sample and comparability in the information provided by the different informant groups (Popham, 1976).

The method as devised by Jellinek utilizes a standardized 66-item questionnaire on drinking practices which is flexible enough to allow the omission of items or addition of further questions of local interest.

The procedure for selecting informants is most important in establishing the validity of the method since informant groups must be representative of the population being surveyed (Popham, 1976). Jellinek comments¹ that within each country there are great differences in social customs and attitudes, according to geographical regions and within those regions according to various occupational groups. The underlying assumption of the method is that there are persons who are adequately acquainted with the habits of a given occupational group in a given geographical locale to provide fairly reliable information about drinking customs as described in the questionnaire. Thus, the selection of informants is done in a manner which would reflect both the major socio-economic differences and the rural-urban differences of the region or country being surveyed. Once a principal informant has been contacted additional participants acquainted with the habits of the occupational-geographical group in question, numbering approximately five, are also contacted. As a group, they endeavour to complete the questionnaire of drinking customs under the direction of the principal informant who acts as a chairman, leading the discussion and recording the responses. The informant "group" or "team" is instructed to answer the questions only as far as the occupational group and the geographical region represented by their group is concerned. Although informants may be well aware of habits of other occupational groups or other regions, their opinions are confined to only that which they represent. Furthermore, because it is quite likely that even within a limited occupational-geographical unit behavior varies, informants are instructed to consider the group as a whole, and the questions

1 From Jellinek's International Survey of Drinking Customs, R.E. Popham (ed.), Addiction Research Foundation, Substudy No. 805, Toronto, 1976.

are designed to elicit accounts of behavior by "the majority of adult men," "a large minority," "only a few," etc.

The group discussions are intended to be spontaneous and to last usually two hours, but not more than three hours. The objective is to reach group consensus on each question. If consensus cannot be reached, then both the majority and minority viewpoint is recorded. Leaders, or principal informants, of each group will have completed a training session in which the questionnaire is examined in detail with an instructor, affiliated with the study, prior to the actual group discussion. Leaders are encouraged to elicit responses from all group participants and to prevent domination of discussion by a particular participant. That the group discussion is not reporting the drinking habits of the participants but rather the habits and attitudes of a designated occupational group, is emphasized repeatedly.

METHOD

1. The Questionnaire

The 56-item schedule used in the Durham informant study utilized most of the questions of Jellinek's standardized ISDC questionnaire (International Survey of Drinking Customs)². Twelve questions were added to the end of the questionnaire. These were drawn from the Durham household survey (Gillies, 1978) and were included to allow a comparison of the results from the two methods. Because trials in other countries (i.e. Mexico and Honduras) indicated that questions cannot be added to the original without some deletions in order to complete the questionnaire within the time requirements, 22 questions from the Jellinek version were deleted. Those deleted seemed least important. A copy of the Durham informant questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

The areas covered by the Durham questionnaire included 44 questions describing the following:

- (i) context of initiation of drinking;
- (ii) use of alcoholic beverages with regular meals;
- (iii) use of alcoholic beverages outside of meals;
- (iv) context in which most drinking occurs;
- (v) customary uses of alcohol;
- (vi) customary use of public drinking places;
- (vii) relationship between sporting events and alcohol use;
- (viii) attitudes toward moderate and heavy consumption of alcohol;

2 A copy of the ISDC questionnaire is included in the report by Popham (1976).

- (ix) reasons for drinking and abstaining;
- (x) signs indicative of drunkenness;
- (xi) estimate of extent of slight intoxication among men;
- (xii) occasions when more drinking than usual is condoned.

In addition 12 questions eliciting the following information were included:

- (i) estimate of the frequency of alcohol use within a 12 month period
- (ii) estimate of the average volume of consumption on a typical drinking day;
- (iii) prevalence of the 5 most frequently reported dependency and problem symptoms of alcohol abuse in the prior 12 months;
- (iv) prevalence of 4 difficulties related to alcohol misuse ever experienced;
- (v) attitude toward 5 drinking problem situations within the community;
- (vi) estimate of illicit use of cannabis, hallucinogens and non-prescription amphetamines.³

In the space provided on the cover page of the questionnaire, the following information was recorded for each group by the group leader: overall occupational classification, the group identification number (provided by York-IBR)⁴, the actual occupation of the individual group members, the length of time required to complete the questionnaire, and the date and location of the group discussion. At the bottom of the page, the leader also recorded the ages of the participants.

3 The results of illicit drug use are not reported in this paper.

4 The study was conducted by the Institute for Behavioural Research, York University, on contract from the Addiction Research Foundation. They were responsible for the sample design, administration and data collection.

2. The Sampling Method

The groups were selected to replicate the occupational classification and sex distributions of the Durham household survey conducted in 1978 (Gillies, 1978). To establish the number of groups required, the sample surveyed in 1978 was classified into six broad occupational classifications, each with an empirically derived ratio of males to females. The number of groups per occupational classification was proportional to the distribution of the particular classification within the general population (i.e. the 1978 survey sample). Similarly, the sex composition of the groups within each occupational classification was representative of the sex distribution within the same among the general population. The resulting allocation of groups to each occupational classification and the sex ratio of the groups is described in Table 1. There were a total of 30 groups, of which 14 were comprised of male participants and 16 were female participants. The members of each group were always of the same sex. The professional/managerial/administrative classification was represented by 4 groups - 2 groups of men and 2 groups of women; the secretarial/sales/service classification by 2 groups of men and 4 groups of women; the industrial workers/tradesmen classification by 8 groups of which only 1 was female; the housewife classification by 8 groups of women; the retired/disabled/student classification by 3 groups - 2 groups of men and 1 group of women; and the farm owners/farm workers classification by 1 group of men.

Originally each group was to consist of 5 participants, of which 1 was a principal informant or "leader." In order to ensure at least 5 members per group, it was decided that at least 2 extra participants per group should be recruited. Thus, the number of group members varied between 5 and 7, depending

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF GROUPS ALLOCATED TO EACH OCCUPATIONAL
CLASSIFICATION AND SEX RATIO OF GROUPS

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION	% IN DURHAM HOUSEHOLD SURVEY	NO. OF GROUPS	SEX DISTRIBUTION IN DURHAM HOUSEHOLD SURVEY		GROUP RATIO MALES:FEMALES
			MALES	FEMALES	
Professional, Managerial, Administrative	13%	4	58%	42%	2:2
Secretarial, Clerical, Sales, Service	19%	6	41%	59%	2:4
Industrial Workers, Tradesmen	28%	8	89%	11%	7:1
Housewives	26%	8	0%	100%	0:8
Retired, Disabled, Students	11%	3	62%	38%	2:1
Farm Owners and Workers	3%	1	87%	13%	1:0

on the number of participants who materialized at the time of the discussion.

The study was publicized through articles in local newspapers, and the personnel offices of four large companies in Oshawa were approached by York-IBR. In addition, notices were posted in staff canteens, locker rooms, etc., and in local shopping malls, but these proved ineffective.

A total of 187 individuals participated in the study. The mean age of the sample was 38.4 years. The professional/managerial/administrative, secretarial/sales/service, and industrial/trade groups were similar in age (i.e. average age was 35.4 years, 34.0 years and 36.1 years, respectively). Whereas housewives and farmers were older (i.e. mean age was 43.4 years and 40.7 years, respectively). The retired/disabled/student group averaged 42.6 years, however, the range of ages between the students and the retired was considerable. Women were, on the average, older than men. The mean ages of the occupational classifications compared well with those of the 1978 Durham household survey.

3. Remuneration

Participants received incentive payments for their involvement in the discussion groups. Incentive payments were not standardized but rather based on a rate schedule according to occupational classification. In addition, leaders were paid a set amount for attending the leader training sessions. All informants were eligible for an additional fee for recruiting others (at a set rate per recruit). When contacting prospective participants, co-operation was usually secured prior to the mention of an incentive payment. All participants were required to sign consent forms provided by ARF (Appendix B) prior to the discussion group, and all monetary payments were issued at the conclusion of the

discussion.

Disabled participants who incurred special transportation costs to attend the discussion groups were reimbursed. If a private home was secured for either a leader training session or a discussion group, a fee was paid to the home owner.

4. Selection and Training of Leaders

In total, 20 leaders (principal informants) were recruited and trained of whom 6 led more than one discussion group. Leaders were recruited through professional and personal contacts of the Toronto Regional Supervisor of York-IBR, other group participants, personnel managers of various companies, and "on-the-spot" recruiting in plant cafeterias, a school cafeteria, and a senior citizen's drop-in-centre. Leaders were selected for their apparent ability to recruit others for the discussion group, and for their "leadership" qualities, i.e. the ability to control and direct discussion, and because they were at ease with others.

Each leader attended a training session during which the questionnaire schedule was discussed in detail and leaders received any special instructions pertaining to their occupational group (Appendix C). For example, the groups reporting on the behavior of housewives were not required to respond to the questions specific to men's drinking behavior unless the members of the group were familiar with male homemakers. The leader training sessions were supervised by a staff member from York-IBR and in most cases by a member of ARF. The duration of the sessions was approximately 2 hours. Half of the training sessions were conducted in a conference room in a hotel, the remainder took place

in private homes. When each leader was contacted he/she was provided with an explanation of the objectives of the study (Appendix D). During the training sessions, a thorough rationale for the study and the background of the method were given.

The group leader was responsible for initiating discussion on each of the questions in the schedule, to control discussion on each question so that the questionnaire would be completed in the required period of time, and to record the answers of the group.

Group leaders were also encouraged to recruit participants for the discussion groups, and were given written instructions as to what to look for when recruiting (Appendix E). These instructions were based on the criteria established by ARF. Group leaders contacted prospective participants either directly or by telephone, at which time leaders were instructed to present the explanation of the study as outlined in Appendix D. The participants of a total of 17 groups were recruited solely by leaders without the assistance of York-IBR.

5. Selection of Group Participants (Other Than Leaders)

Group participants were recruited in a number of ways: through group leaders, professional or personal contacts of the organizers (York-IBR), through referrals from the personnel offices of several large companies in Oshawa, and as a result of local newspaper articles on the study. A total of 167 group participants (other than leaders) were recruited.

6. Conduct of the Discussion Groups

The group discussions were conducted in the city of Oshawa and the adjacent towns of Ajax, Pickering, and Whitby. The majority of the 30 groups were held in a private home (n=12) or in a hotel (n=9). The remaining groups took place in a nursing home (n=3), a Y.W.C.A. (n=2), the employee lounge of a large company (n=2), a steelworker's hall (n=1), and a church (n=1). The number of participants in each of the 30 groups varied from 5 to 7; 12 groups had 7 members, 13 groups had 6 members, and 5 groups had 5 members. Over half of the groups were held in the evening (n=17), 9 were held in the morning, and the remaining 4 were scheduled for the afternoon. All of the groups took place on a weekday. Most participants arrived on schedule for the groups. There were approximately 9 last minute drop-outs but most of those were replaced prior to the group convening.

Generally speaking, all groups were held in a relaxed, friendly, congenial atmosphere. The average length of discussion was 2 hours 17 minutes. Participants were about equally divided in their views as to the length of discussion; some found it too long and had trouble concentrating on the last few questions.

Prior to each session, once the consent forms had been completed, a brief chat ensued as to the purpose of the study and what was expected of group members during the discussion. It was generally felt that this procedure initiated discussion on the questions and established an objective for each participant, i.e. to complete all the questions.

7. Problems with Using the Informant Method

The main problem was that of recruiting leaders. Participants were generally easy to assemble but most did not want to accept the responsibility of leadership. There were some problems peculiar to certain occupational groups. Transportation presented a problem for the disabled, in addition to the need for ramps and wide hallways and doors to accommodate wheelchairs. The farmer group was a problem inasmuch as they work odd, long hours. Male clerical and related workers appeared to be rare and difficult to recruit. Many salesmen worked on a commission basis and would not take time to participate in the project. Most of the groups which were most difficult to recruit and assemble were male. Women were described as being much more enthusiastic and forthcoming.

Some questions were found to be vague or poorly understood by participants, however, these were rare. In total 35 questions were listed but most of these presented difficulties for only 1 or 2 groups; only 7 questions were problematic for up to 3 groups; and only 2 questions were vague for up to 4 groups. Most questions attained a consensus, however questions requiring percentage estimates promoted lengthy discussions (e.g. per cent of men and women drinking in various contexts, suffering problem and dependency symptoms related to alcohol, etc.).

RESULTS: PART I

DRINKING PRACTICES IN DURHAM

1. Drinking Patterns

(i) Average Daily Alcohol Consumption When Drinking

On a typical drinking day (i.e. not every day) the average adult was reported to consume 6.73 centilitres (cl.) of absolute alcohol, which is the equivalent of approximately 4 bottles of beer, or 3½ glasses of wine or 4½ mixed drinks. The majority of drinkers (80%) usually consume less than 10 cl. absolute alcohol when drinking and one-fifth consumes larger quantities (Table 2).

On the average, men typically consume larger amounts when drinking than women. The mean volume consumed on a drinking day was reported as 8.51 cl. absolute alcohol for men compared with 4.96 cl. absolute alcohol for women; furthermore, over five times as many men as women usually consume quantities of 10 cl. absolute alcohol or greater.

Among both men and women, the heaviest consumers were reported by the industrial/trade group and the lightest consumers by the farm group. Of the remaining, those in the secretarial/sales/service group reported an average consumption volume above that of men and women, respectively, as a whole while the professional/managerial/administrative, retired/disabled/student, and housewife groups reported an average consumption level below that of men and women, respectively, as a whole.

(ii) Frequency of Drinking

The informants reported that the majority of adults consume alcohol at least once a year, three-quarters drink once a month or more often, and approximately one-third have a drink three or more times a week (Table 3).

TABLE 2

AVERAGE DAILY CONSUMPTION WHEN DRINKING (IN CENTILITRES OF ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL)

CENTILITRES OF ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL	MALES %	FEMALES %	TOTAL %
1.00 or less	0.0	0.0	0.0
1.01 - 1.50	0.0	6.9	4.0
1.51 - 2.00	0.0	0.0	0.0
2.01 - 2.50	4.8	6.9	6.0
2.51 - 3.00	4.8	17.2	12.0
3.01 - 9.99	52.4	62.1	58.0
10.00 and over	38.1	6.9	20.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 3

FREQUENCY OF ALCOHOL USE

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING IN PRIOR YEAR	MALES %	FEMALES %	TOTAL %
Three or more times a week	45.1	25.7	33.9
Once a month or more often	35.6	47.7	42.6
At least once a year	12.6	18.2	15.8
Did not drink	6.7	8.4	7.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Drinking was more frequent among men than women.

Within occupational classifications, the farm group represented the least frequent drinkers among both men and women; the majority reportedly consume alcohol less than once a month or not at all. There was little variation found in the frequency of drinking between the other groups; the majority drink once a month or more often.

(iii) Frequency of Slight Intoxication Among Men

Most men were reported to get slightly intoxicated at least once a year, the majority at least once a month, and almost half at least once a week (Table 4). However, this was a daily occurrence for only a small minority of men.

Drinking enough to feel the "effects" was reported as a more frequent event through the course of a year by the industrial/trade group than by others, and as least frequent by the farm group. A large proportion of all groups except the farmers - and over half in the case of the industrial/trade group - reported that slight intoxication among men occurred as often as once a week. However, only a small minority of any of the groups (approximately 5% or less) described this drinking pattern as an everyday occurrence.

Summary

Most people were reported to consume moderate quantities on an average drinking day (i.e. 6.73 cl. absolute alcohol) and to drink once a week or less often. Men typically drank more frequently and larger quantities than women, and many experienced a state of slight inebriation as regularly as once a week. The heaviest consumers were reported by the industrial/trade group; on the other hand, the farm group rarely imbibed and then only in small amounts.

TABLE 4

PROPORTION OF MEN WHO DRINK ENOUGH TO FEEL THE "EFFECTS" OF ALCOHOL

FREQUENCY OF SLIGHT INTOXICATION IN PRIOR YEAR	MALES %
Almost every day	4.6
3-4 times a week	14.0
1-2 times a week	29.9
2-3 times a month	20.5
About once a month	12.8
A couple of times a year	9.1
Never	9.0
Total	100.0

2. Drinking Habits and Customs

(i) Initiation of Drinking

Most men and women first began to use alcoholic beverages with their friends, without parental consent. All of the informant groups agreed that this was a normative mode of initiation for most men, and the majority of groups similarly agreed that this was the case for most women. In the latter case, some housewives reported that women first became acquainted with alcoholic beverages in the home with family or when they started to work; whereas a minority of the retired/disabled/student group reported that initial drinking occurred with friends, with parental approval.

(ii) Use of Alcoholic Beverages with Meals

Consumption of alcoholic beverages with meals was not found to be a regular habit among most men and women. The drinking of any alcoholic beverage with breakfast was reported as a very rare occurrence, although a large proportion of men and a somewhat smaller proportion of women would do so under special circumstances.

Consumption of alcohol with lunch was more common than with breakfast, and more frequent among men than women. The majority of men were reported to drink at midday at least once a week (76% of groups), but only a small minority as often as everyday (9% of groups) particularly those represented by the retired/disabled/student and industrial/trade groups. Beer was the preferred beverage with lunch among men. In comparison, only a minority of groups (21%) reported that women consume an alcoholic beverage with lunch as often as once a week, although under special circumstances a much larger proportion would do so; very few (4% of groups), predominantly the industrial/trade group, reported lunchtime

drinking among women as occurring almost daily. Unlike men, women usually preferred a liquor-based drink at lunch.

Drinking was most common with the evening meal. Most men (95% of groups) and the majority of women (68% of groups) were reported to consume an alcoholic beverage with their dinner at least once a week. In general, men usually consumed beer whereas women preferred wine. As a daily practice, however, drinking during the evening meal was not as prevalent: 19% of the groups, particularly the retired/disabled/student and industrial/trade groups, reported daily use for men; and 7% of the groups, predominantly the retired/disabled/student and housewife groups, reported this pattern among women.

(iii) Use of Alcoholic Beverages Outside of Meals

The majority of people, as a rule, do not use alcoholic beverages outside the context of meals (Table 5), however, many were reported to do so often. The professional/managerial/administrative, secretarial/sales/service, and industrial/trade groups reported drinking separate from eating occasions more regularly than others. Women and farmers usually used alcohol in the context of a meal.

Consumption of distilled spirits immediately prior to meals was not considered typical of most people, although it was thought to be more common among men than women. Similarly, it was not a regular practice for any particular occupational group, although it was reported more frequently by the professional/managerial/administrative, secretarial/sales/service, and industrial/trade groups with respect to men, and by the professional/managerial/administrative and housewife groups in the case of women.

TABLE 5

USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES SEPARATE FROM MEALS BY MOST PEOPLE

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING OUTSIDE OF MEALS	BY MOST MEN %	BY MOST WOMEN %
As a rule	27.3	13.3
Often	68.2	66.7
Rarely	4.5	20.0
Never	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0

(iv) Use of Alcoholic Beverages on Social Occasions

Drinking was shown to be connected with more structured social occasions, but the strength of the association depended to a large extent upon sex and occupational classification. For example, the majority of groups (77%) thought that most men, other than farmers, would consider parties without alcohol as failures; whereas, only a minority (30%) expressed this opinion typical of women, with the exception of women employed in secretarial/sales/service occupations who would more likely consider the absence of alcohol on such occasions a disadvantage. Further demonstrations of the customary use of alcohol on social occasions are presented in Table 6.

The majority of all occupational groups reported that most people keep a supply of alcoholic beverages in the home. Furthermore, it was customary to offer a drink to a visitor, though less so for housewives and farmers. Most groups reported that it is customary for women to offer a drink to a female visitor regardless of the presence or absence of men, with the exception of the farm group in which case this was very rarely done.

Drinking to someone's health was not considered a common custom for most people. The practice of buying rounds was thought to be more typical but not by the majority of groups with the exception of the farm and industrial/trade groups.

A large minority of men reportedly separate themselves from women for the purposes of drinking, particularly those represented by the industrial/trade and professional/managerial/administrative groups.

The majority of all groups reported that alcoholic beverages are sometimes used in the same ways as non-alcoholic beverages; namely, beer in the

TABLE 6

DRINKING CUSTOMS ON SOCIAL OCCASIONS

IT IS CUSTOMARY AMONG <u>MOST</u> PEOPLE:	% OF INFORMANT GROUPS
To keep a supply of alcoholic beverages in the home	83.3
To offer a drink to a visitor	66.7
To drink to someone's health	16.7
To buy rounds	41.4
For men to segregate from women for the purposes of drinking	42.9
To sometimes use alcoholic beverages in the same way as non-alcoholic beverages	96.7

summertime and, to a lesser extent, spirits. Wine, cider, and fruit punches were also mentioned.

(v) Use of Alcoholic Beverages at Sporting Events

Alcohol consumption on the occasion of a sports event depended upon whether one was a spectator or a participant (Table 7). It was reported customary for many spectators to drink during sporting events, particularly by the retired/disabled/student, secretarial/sales/service, and the industrial/trade groups. In many cases sporting events take place in licensed establishments such as curling clubs where alcohol is available. It was not typical of participants from any occupational group to drink during sporting events. However, subsequent to a sporting event the majority of all groups except farmers reported that both spectators and participants imbibe to celebrate a victory or to bear a defeat.

(vi) Use of Public Drinking Places

Although drinking in public is common on some social and recreational occasions, it appears to be separate from others. The majority of groups reported that most people do not arrange business meetings in public drinking places, nor do they use such facilities to meet for conversation or as sports clubs. Of course this does not assume that alcohol is not associated with such affairs because informants were not questioned as to whether or not drinking occurred on these occasions, but rather it demonstrates that the public drinking place serves a function other than for the conduct of these everyday activities.

Use of public drinking places for business meetings was most frequently reported by the professional/managerial/administrative group, and to meet as sports clubs, by the secretarial/sales/service group. The majority of all groups

TABLE 7

ALCOHOL USE AND SPORTING EVENTS

CUSTOMARY USE OF ALCOHOL	AMONG SPECTATORS %	AMONG PARTICIPANTS %
It is customary to drink during a sporting event	60.0	16.7
It is customary to drink after a sporting event to celebrate a victory or to make more bearable a defeat	90.0	86.7

did not report use of such a context to meet for conversation.

(vii) Location of Drinking

The largest proportion of people were reported to do most of their drinking in the context of a home (56% of groups), either their own home (alone or with friends) or in the home of relatives or friends (Table 8). Drinking in home settings was most common among women, particularly those represented by the housewife, secretarial/sales/service , and professional/managerial/administrative groups. Whereas drinking in bars, taverns, restaurants, social or sports clubs, or elsewhere (e.g. when skiing, sailing, camping, at the beach, in the hospital or a nursing home) was more typical of men, especially in the retired/disabled/student group. The retired and disabled were examined separately from the students and in both cases drinking was usually done outside the context of the home. This would suggest that drinking among students is not encouraged by parents. With respect to retired and disabled persons living in institutions, it is possible that "home" was not interpreted as meaning current residence. The modal context for drinking was not clear for the industrial/trade and farm groups: approximately half of each group usually drank in a home setting.

Summary

Most men and women first became acquainted with alcoholic beverages with their friends, without parental approval. Drinking with meals was most common with the evening meal, and among men; only a minority consume alcohol with meals as often as everyday. On the whole, beer was the preferred beverage among men, but women favored wine and liquor. Most people did not use alcoholic beverages outside the context of meals regularly. Drinking was integrated with

TABLE 8

USUAL CONTEXT OF DRINKING AMONG MOST MEN AND WOMEN

USUAL CONTEXT OF DRINKING	BY MEN %	BY WOMEN %	TOTAL %
At home (alone or with friends)	34.8	37.2	36.2
In home of friends or relatives	15.5	23.0	19.8
In bars or taverns (no meals served)	22.0	13.3	17.0
In restaurants	11.7	10.7	11.1
In social/sports clubs	11.0	11.5	11.3
In other places	5.0	4.3	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

social occasions, and "expected" by many; however, alcohol was perceived as less of a social facilitator for women and farmers. Drinking during sporting events was common though not by participants, except subsequent to the event. The public drinking place was separate from the conduct of daily activities, such as business meetings, sport or social club meetings, or for conversation. Drinking in the context of a home was more common than outside the home (e.g. bars, restaurants, social clubs, etc.); most typical of women and housewives, and least frequent for men and the retired/disabled/student group. Overall, drinking habits and customs were more widespread in the industrial/trade group than in the others, and least in the farm group.

3. Attitudes Toward Alcohol and Drinking

(i) Properties Attributed to Alcohol

Very few groups (3%) reported that drinkers attribute food value to alcohol or believe that it is beneficial to one's health. In comparison, a sizeable proportion (43%), particularly the housewife and industrial/trade groups, reported that alcohol is believed to have specific medicinal properties.

(ii) Attitudes Toward Moderate Use of Alcohol

In general, moderate consumption of alcohol was not disapproved of but rather regarded with indifference by the majority of men and women, regardless of the sex of the consumer. Women were more disapproving than men, particularly of alcohol use by their own sex.

(iii) Attitudes Toward Excessive Use of Alcohol

The majority of all occupational groups reported that most women do not regard the ability to drink large quantities of alcohol as a matter of prestige

but this was not the case for men (Table 9): half the groups reported that most men countenance this attitude, particularly the secretarial/sales service, industrial/trade and retired/disabled/student groups.

In some instances, men are socially stigmatized by excessive use of alcohol. For example, heavy drinking was reported as a reason for refusing a marriage proposal by most parents of a girl, by all occupational groups (Table 9). However, girls were thought to be somewhat more tolerant of heavy drinking by a prospective spouse, particularly girls from families represented by the secretarial/sales/service and housewife groups, and would be less likely to refuse a proposal on this account.

Heavy drinking was not generally associated with playing games (e.g. billiards, cards, etc.) in public drinking places although it was reported more frequently by the industrial/trade and farm groups.

(iv) Attitudes Toward Intoxication

Most women were reported to tolerate a single instance of drunkenness in men, and a large minority (47% of groups) consider it natural and acceptable. Women represented by the industrial/trade group were most accepting of this type of behavior, whereas the housewife, retired/disabled/student, and farm groups were tolerant but considered it undesirable. The professional/managerial/administrative and secretarial/sales/service groups were divided in their approval.

With regard to regular intoxication, both men and women were disapproving of frequent intoxication; the majority reportedly avoid a man who gets drunk once or twice a week, but more tolerate infrequent intoxication (i.e. once a month). Women were generally less tolerant of drunkenness than men, however, men and women were closer in tolerance levels when excessive drinking

TABLE 9

ATTITUDES TOWARD EXCESSIVE USE OF ALCOHOL

ATTITUDE TOWARD HEAVY DRINKING	% OF INFORMANT GROUPS
The ability to consume large quantities of alcohol is regarded as a matter of prestige:	
(a) by most men	50.0
(b) by most women	3.3
Heavy drinking is a reason for refusing a proposal of marriage:	
(a) by most parents	93.3
(b) by most girls	60.0

was a more frequent occurrence (Table 10). Tolerance of excessive drinking was reported least often by the housewife and farm groups, and most often by the secretarial/sales/service group.

A large proportion of adults were reported to be tolerant of heavy drinking among their friends and acquaintances, particularly if the drinker was male. For example, if a man gets easily intoxicated at parties, a small majority (58% of groups) would invite him to parties regardless, and a large minority (48% of groups) would do so in the case of a woman who gets easily intoxicated at these social gatherings. Intoxication in such circumstances was not uniformly met with disapproval. On the basis of comments by informants, it appears that subsequent invitations to social occasions depend less on the probability of drunkenness than on the actual behavior or disposition when under the influence and the intimacy of the friendship. If conditions are favorable, drunkenness is tolerated to a greater extent than if they are unfavorable.

Under these circumstances, the secretarial/sales/service, housewife, and farm groups reported the greatest tolerance of drunkenness in men and the secretarial/sales/service and farm groups were most tolerant of drunkenness in women. The retired/disabled/student groups reported the least tolerance in both cases.

(v) Reasons for Drinking

On the whole, alcohol was popular for facilitating sociability and relieving anxiety. The following were reported by the majority of groups to constitute at least somewhat important reasons for drinking alcoholic beverages for most people: to relax or to be more sociable (100% of groups); because it is a habit (93% of groups); like the smell or taste of alcohol (83% of groups);

TABLE 10

ATTITUDE TOWARD REGULAR INTOXICATION

ATTITUDE TOWARD DRUNKENNESS	FREQUENCY OF INTOXICATION		
	1-2 TIMES A WEEK %	WEEKENDS %	ONCE A MONTH %
Most <u>men</u> avoid the company of a man who gets drunk	77.3	36.8	5.0
Most <u>women</u> avoid the company of a man who gets drunk	90.0	67.9	25.0

personal problems (82% of groups); to overcome fatigue or nervous tension (79% of groups); and because friends and/or relatives drink (67% of groups). Of these reasons the first two were ranked as very important by a large proportion of groups. The majority did not consider the use of alcohol to stimulate the mind or to make work easier nor having parents who drink/drank as important reasons for drinking.

Attitudes were fairly homogeneous among occupational classes. The majority of all groups attributed some importance to liking the smell or taste of alcohol, to relax or be more sociable, and because it is a habit; and attributed no importance to making work easier as a reason for drinking. Differences observed between groups included: the housewife and farm groups who found parental drinking of more importance than did others; the industrial/trade group who did not consider drinking by friends and/or relatives an important reason, contrary to others; the farm group group who did not identify personal problems as an important reason to drink; the retired/disabled/student and farm groups who attributed no importance in using alcohol to overcome fatigue or nervous tension; and the retired/disabled/student group who attributed some importance to drinking in order to stimulate the mind.

Additional important reasons for drinking offered included: to feel good, to increase sex drive, to celebrate, for medicinal purposes, to attain prestige, and to accompany meals.

(vi) Reasons for Abstaining or Being Careful About Drinking

The most important reasons for abstaining or being careful about drinking were reported to be having a spouse who is or was an alcoholic, and health considerations; the majority of groups considered these reasons as very

important. The majority of groups attributed at least some importance to religious scruples (83% of groups), fear of consequences (90% of groups), having a parent who was an alcoholic (90% of groups), financial reasons (77% of groups) and dislike of the smell or taste of alcohol (77% of groups). The majority did not consider abstaining parents to be an important reasons for abstention or being careful about drinking.

Within occupational groups there was little variation in the relative importance for modifying drinking attributed to having an alcoholic spouse, health reasons, religious reasons, fear of consequences, or having an alcoholic parent. Financial reasons were not considered important by the majority of the farm and retired/disabled/student groups, nor by a large proportion of the professional/managerial/administrative group. A dislike of the smell or taste of alcohol was not important for the retired/disabled/student group. Having abstaining parents was more important for the retired/disabled/student and farm groups than among others.

Additional important reasons for abstaining included responsibilities, marriage breakdown, child abuse, death, accidents, insurance, demerit points on driver's licence, job, concern for other people, awareness of harmful effects of alcohol abuse through medical reasearch, and the need to set an example for children.

(vii) Reasons for Drinking Only in Rare Instances

Five reasons (i.e. moral, health, financial, dislike of taste, and fear of consequences) were ranked according to their relative frequency as reasons for drinking only in rare instances. There was no particular common reason for moderating use of alcohol; none of the reasons queried was rated as

the most frequent by a majority of groups. Health reasons were ranked first above the others by the largest proportion of groups (41%); financial reasons were ranked as least common (Table 11).

Within occupational classes, moral reasons were rated as most frequent by the farm group, and health reasons by the retired/disabled/student group. The remaining groups did not consistently rank any of the reasons as the most frequent for drinking only in rare instances.

(viii) Occasions on Which More Drinking Than Usual is Condoned

More drinking than usual was reportedly condoned for national festivals (80% of groups) and during other events such as weddings, christenings, consecrations, funerals, etc. (90% of groups), but not for church festivals (30% of groups). Other occasions specified by informants included, conventions, stags, school reunions, promotions at work, lottery wins, Octoberfests and ethnic events, Grey Cup and other sports events, retirement parties, graduations, anniversaries, birthdays, divorces, and celebrations of any kind.

Within occupational classes, the majority of all groups except the retired/disabled/student sanctioned more drinking than usual on national festivals; the majority of only the professional/managerial/administrative group condoned more drinking on church festivals; heavier drinking than usual during other events queried was reported by a majority of all groups.

(ix) Criteria of Drunkenness

Overall, the informants were able to provide a definitive picture of whether or not a person is drunk. Generally agreed upon indicators of drunkenness for a man (among all occupational groups) were the following: slurred speech, uncertainty on feet, and becoming ill. The majority of groups, except the

TABLE 11

THE MOST FREQUENT REASONS FOR DRINKING ONLY IN RARE INSTANCES

REASONS FOR DRINKING ONLY IN RARE INSTANCES	% OF GROUPS ASSIGNING <u>MOST FREQUENT RANK</u>
Health reasons	41.4
Moral reasons	31.0
Dislike of taste	17.2
Fear of consequences	10.3
Financial reasons	6.9

secretarial/sales/service, considered the making of unfitting remarks in the presence of women and, with the exception of the professional/managerial/administrative group, becoming argumentative as signs of inebriation. A large minority, particularly housewives and to a lesser extent farmers, considered a man drunk if he becomes sexually aggressive, drinks too much, becomes very talkative, or if his face becomes flushed.

Apart from those listed on the questionnaire, the majority of groups specified additional indicators of drunkenness for a man such as:

- being withdrawn;
- behaving out of character;
- passing out or falling asleep;
- physically aggressive or getting into fights;
- careless of property;
- using offensive language;
- becoming loud and boastful or else too friendly;
- sings, strips;
- bloodshot, glassy or wandering eyes;
- staggered walk;
- slow reactions while driving;
- insistence on doing something;
- smell of alcohol on breath.

Similarly, indicators of drunkenness for a woman included uncertainty on feet, becoming ill, making amorous advances, and becoming obtrusive towards men, although the latter two signs were not the majority opinion of the professional/managerial/administrative group. Only a minority of groups considered

drinking too much, becoming very talkative and becoming flushed in the face as signs of drunkenness for a woman although these were more likely to be indicators for housewives.

The majority of groups specified one or more of the following as additional signs of drunkenness for a woman:

- slurred speech;
- aggressive behaviour;
- inappropriate remarks or language;
- behaving out of character;
- passing out;
- depressed mood;
- glazed eyes;
- bursting into giggles or tears;
- lack of regard for personal appearance;
- staggering gait;
- behaving in a loud or obnoxious manner;
- sings, strips, dances on tables;
- insistance on doing something;
- driving slowly;
- smell of alcohol on her breath.

Summary

The acceptance of moderate alcohol consumption was generally widespread; excessive use, on the other hand, was tolerated to a lesser extent. Women were more disapproving of drinking and drunkenness than men, and were particularly critical of alcohol use by other women. The secretarial/sales/service

group was generally the most tolerant of heavy drinking.

Many reasons for drinking were considered important; namely to be more sociable and to cope with anxiety or personal problems. Similarly, there were several important reasons for modifying drinking or abstaining, most notably having an alcoholic spouse and for health considerations. Reasons for drinking only in rare instances were less consistent; health reasons were the most popular, although by less than a majority, and financial reasons least. More drinking than usual was condoned for many occasions except those related to church activities, and, on the whole, informants were generally consistent in defining indicators of inebriation.

4. Difficulties and Problems Related to Alcohol Use

(i) Problem and Dependency Symptoms

A large proportion of both men and women were reported to have experienced at least one problem or dependency symptom in the prior year (Table 12). The most common symptoms were feeling the effects of alcohol while on the job, and having been ashamed of something done while drinking. Men experienced problem or dependency symptoms at a higher rate than women, with the exception of "feeling that drinking should be reduced" and "being ashamed of something done while drinking" which were reported for similar proportions of men and women.

Just over half of men (54% of groups) were reported to have felt the effects of alcohol while on the job; the male:female ratio was 1.4:1; similar proportions of men and women had felt ashamed of something they did while drinking (43% and 39% of groups, respectively); and, one-third of both men

TABLE 12

DEPENDENCY AND PROBLEM SYMPTOMS RELATED TO ALCOHOL USE

DEPENDENCY AND PROBLEM SYMPTOMS EXPERIENCED IN PRIOR YEAR	% OF INFORMANT GROUPS REPORTING SYMPTOM FOR		TOTAL
	MALES	FEMALES	
Felt that drinking should be cut down or stopped altogether	32.6	32.9	32.8
Awakened the next day not being able to remember some of the things done while drinking	35.0	17.6	25.0
Felt the effects of alcohol while on the job	53.8	39.0	45.2
Have taken a drink first thing in the morning	24.5	12.4	17.5
Have been ashamed of something done while drinking	43.4	39.3	41.0

and women thought that their drinking should be reduced or stopped altogether. Twice as many men (35% of groups) as women (18% of groups) were reported to have suffered memory loss after drinking, and had taken a drink first thing in the morning (24% and 12% of groups respectively).

Both men and women represented by the industrial/trade group more often experienced each of the problem and dependency symptoms than did the other groups. The most common symptoms reported by the professional/managerial/administrative group were feeling the effects on the job and being ashamed of something done while drinking; sex differences were small. In the secretarial/sales/service group the most common symptoms reported for men were memory loss after drinking and feeling the effects of alcohol while on the job; and for women the most frequent symptom was feeling ashamed of something done while drinking. The industrial/trade group reported that the majority of men had felt the effects of alcohol while working and a large proportion had been ashamed of something done while drinking; over half of women had experienced these symptoms. In general, housewives reported symptoms at rates lowest to only those of farmers. The most common symptom reported by housewives was feeling that drinking should be reduced or cut down altogether. A large proportion of men and women represented by the retired/disabled/student group had felt that that their drinking should be reduced or stopped altogether, and had felt the effects while on the job. The farmers reported the lowest rate of symptoms; the most common for both men and women was being ashamed of something done while drinking.

The prevalence of problem and dependency symptoms appears considerably greater than that reported in the literature based on surveys. There is some indication, based on comments from informants, that only drinkers were considered

when estimates were being formulated. Most likely these estimates represent occurrences among drinkers rather than the overall population.

(ii) Drinking-Related Difficulties

The most common difficulty related to drinking was concern expressed by family, relatives, friends or acquaintances over drinking (Table 13). About 1 in 3 people were reported to have had this difficulty at some time in their life. Difficulties with police or other authorities, and difficulties at work were the next most common and difficulties at school least common.

Men were more likely to experience difficulties related to drinking than women, although similar proportions have had concern expressed by their family or friends over drinking. Approximately twice as many men as women have had difficulties with the police, and on the job.

Concern by family and friends over drinking was the most prevalent difficulty reported for women by all groups and for men by all groups except the retired/disabled/student. The retired/disabled/student group reported difficulties with police as the most frequent problem for men, and difficulties with police and concern by family and friends for women. The industrial/trade group reported more difficulty at work due to drinking than did the other groups.

5. Attitudes Toward Drinking Problems Within the Community

The majority of people were reported to be concerned about drinking problems within their community. The informant groups were of the opinion that most people feel that something should be done about each of the following examples of alcohol abuse in their neighborhood: (i) a man beats his wife/partner while he is drunk (97% of groups); (ii) a man drinks so much that he

TABLE 13

DRINKING-RELATED DIFFICULTIES AT WORK, SCHOOL, WITH POLICE AND FAMILY

DRINKING-RELATED DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED "EVER"	% OF INFORMANT GROUPS REPORTING DIFFICULTY FOR		TOTAL
	MALES	FEMALES	
Difficulties at work (e.g. being told off, lost pay, threatened with job loss, lost job, other)	22.5	12.5	16.7
Difficulties at school (e.g. being suspended, expelled, other)	11.2	7.1	8.8
Difficulties with police or other authorities (e.g. driving, public drunkenness, fighting, other)	27.7	11.9	18.6
Concern by family, relatives, friends or other acquaintances over drinking	40.5	34.1	36.9

falls down on the ground and cannot get up (97% of groups); (iii) a person spends so much on drinking that there is not enough for food for the family (100% of groups); (iv) a woman in a public place has drunk so much that she cannot walk well (77% of groups); and (v) a bus driver appears to have been drinking before driving (100% of groups).

There was little variation in response between occupational groups except for the case of the woman in a public place who has drunk so much that she cannot walk well; the professional/managerial/administrative and the secretarial/sales/service groups were both ambivalent as to whether or not something should be done (half the groups thought something should be done, half the groups thought not).

RESULTS: PART II

COMPARISONS OF THE INFORMANT METHOD WITH THE SURVEY METHOD

1. Comparison of Results on Drinking Patterns and Habits Obtained by the Two Methods

There were eight areas on which responses using the two methods could be compared. The results of the comparisons are discussed below.

(i) Frequency of Alcohol Use Within the Prior Year

The informant method accounted for a larger proportion of frequent drinkers among both men and women than did the survey method (Figure 1). The proportion of the population drinking three or more times a week according to the informant method was twice that for the household survey. The increase in frequent drinkers was most striking among women; the proportion of women consuming alcohol at least three times a week reported by the informant method was $3\frac{1}{2}$ times greater than that reported in the survey. The informant method accounted for just over $1\frac{1}{2}$ times as many men drinking this frequently as accounted for by the survey method.

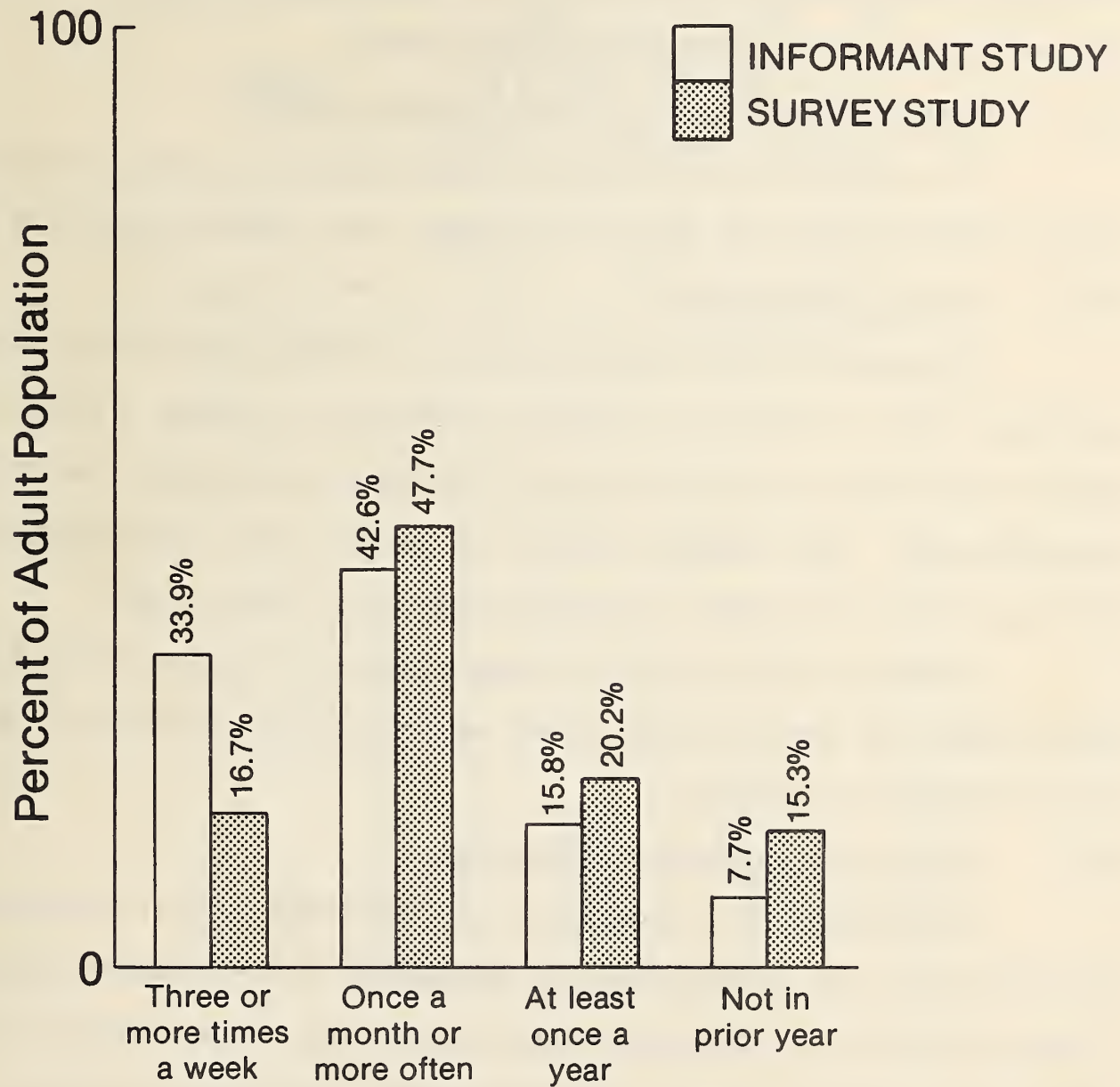
Similar proportions of moderately frequent drinkers (i.e. at least once a month but less than three times a week) were obtained by the two methods, especially among women and to a lesser extent among men.

The proportions of infrequent drinkers and abstainers were smaller using the informant method when compared with the survey method, mainly due to the larger proportion of drinkers among women accounted for using the former method.

Overall, the informant results showed more frequent drinkers among

FIGURE 1

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING AMONG THE ADULT POPULATION: COMPARISON OF INFORMANT AND SURVEY RESULTS



Frequency of Drinking in Prior Year

women when compared with the survey method. The differences between men and women were reduced considerably using the informant method. Where 3.7 times as many men as women were reportedly frequent consumers using the survey method, the differences were reduced to a ratio of 1.75:1 using the informant method. Similarly, the differences between men and women among infrequent drinkers and abstainers were smaller using the informant method.

(ii) Average Daily Alcohol Consumption When Drinking

The informant results showed a higher volume of alcohol consumed on a typical drinking day, among both men and women, than did the survey data (Table 14).

(iii) Context of Drinking

Although the most frequent context of drinking was the home (either own home or that of friends or relatives) regardless of method, a larger proportion of drinking was reported to be in the home in the survey than in the informant study. The informant results, on the other hand, indicated more drinking in bars and taverns, restaurants and social sports clubs.

There was little variation between methods in accounting for differences between the sexes; sex differences were approximately the same regardless of which method was employed.

(iv) Reasons for Drinking or Abstaining

Respondents in the informant study attributed greater importance to selected reasons for drinking than did respondents in the household survey, and a larger proportion in the former study reported most of the reasons for drinking as "very important" than in the latter study. Similarly, respondents in the informant study attributed greater importance to the reasons presented for abstaining or being careful about drinking than did respondents in the household survey.

TABLE 14

MEAN VOLUME OF CONSUMPTION ON AVERAGE DRINKING DAY

METHOD	MEAN CENTILITRES OF ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL CONSUMED ON AVERAGE DRINKING DAY		
	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL
Informant	8.509	4.959	6.725
Household survey	6.101	3.999	5.199

(v) Frequency of Slight Intoxication in the Prior Year Among Men

Respondents in the informant study indicated a higher frequency of slight intoxication in the year prior than did those in the survey study (Figure 2). Almost half of the male population (48%) was reported to drink enough to feel the "effects" of alcohol at least once a week as estimated by the informant method, compared with only 16% in the household survey.

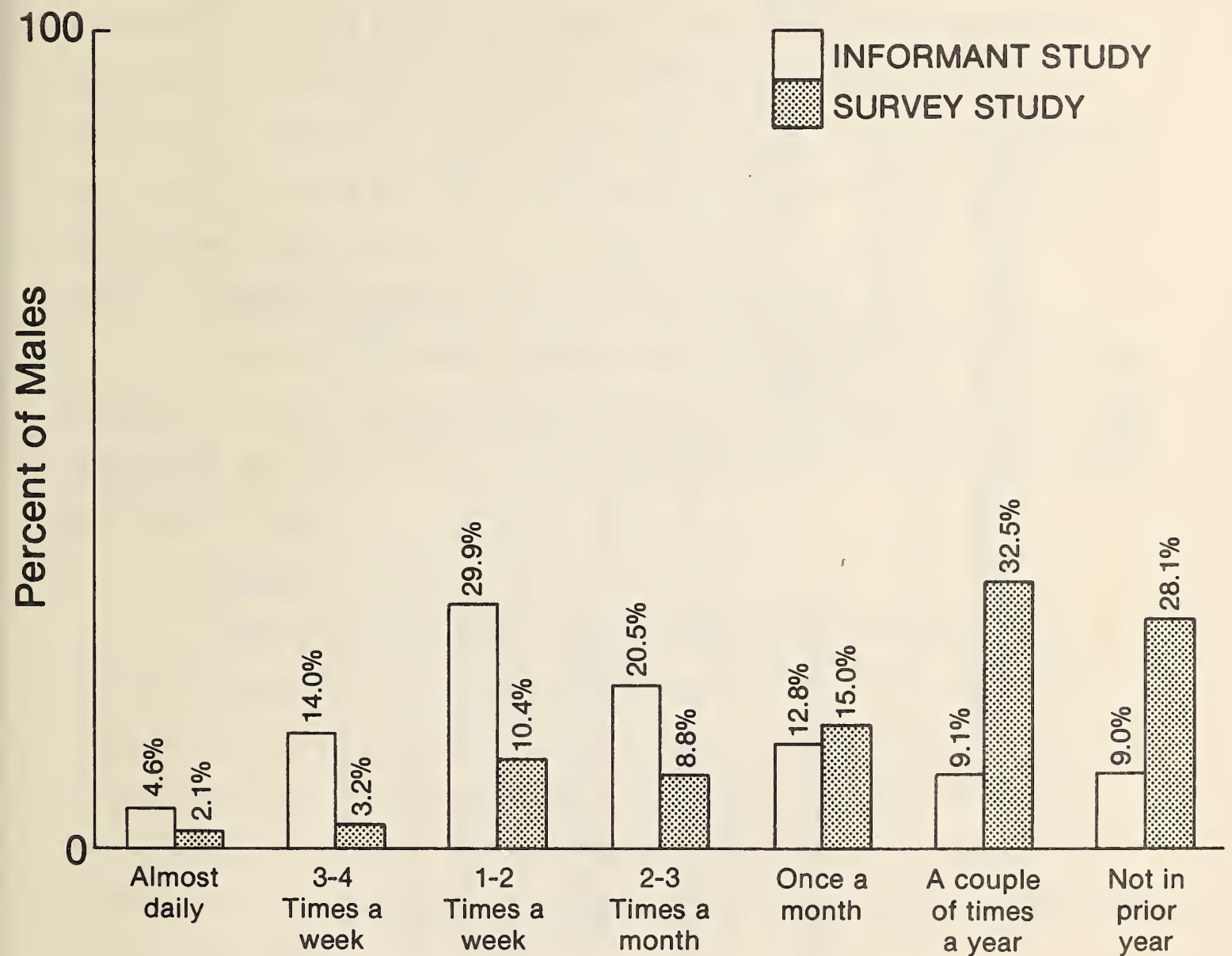
(vi) Prevalence of Dependency and Problem Symptoms

A much larger proportion of both men and women were reported to have problem and dependency symptoms when estimated by the informant method compared with the survey method (Table 15); almost twice as many have felt that their drinking should be cut down or stopped altogether, $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as many have suffered memory loss following drinking, more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as many have taken a drink first thing in the morning, 5 times as many have been ashamed of something they've done while drinking and 7 times as many have felt the effects of alcohol while on the job. The most common symptoms indicated by the informant survey were feeling the effects of alcohol while on the job, and being ashamed of something done while drinking, whereas the most common symptoms indicated by the household survey were feeling that drinking should be reduced or stopped altogether and suffering memory loss the following morning. Morning drinking was least common regardless of method used.

The differences between the sexes in the frequency of each symptom were reduced considerably when the results of the informant study were compared with those of the survey study. Both studies indicated that women were closest to men in feeling that their drinking should be reduced or stopped, and feeling ashamed of something done while drinking, but under the informant method the

FIGURE 2

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING ENOUGH TO FEEL THE
"EFFECTS" AMONG MEN: COMPARISON OF INFORMANT
AND SURVEY RESULTS



Frequency of Slight Intoxication Among Men in Prior Year

TABLE 15

PREVALENCE OF PROBLEM AND DEPENDENCY SYMPTOMS:
COMPARISON OF INFORMANT ESTIMATES WITH SURVEY ESTIMATES

DEPENDENCY AND PROBLEM SYMPTOMS	INFORMANT STUDY		SURVEY STUDY	
	% OF POPULATION REPORTING SYMPTOM	MALE:FEMALE RATIO	% OF POPULATION REPORTING SYMPTOM	MALE:FEMALE RATIO
Felt that drinking should be cut down or stopped altogether	32.8	1.0 : 1	18.0	1.7 : 1
Awakened the next day not being able to remember some of the things done while drinking	25.0	2.0 : 1	9.8	3.0 : 1
Felt the effects of alcohol while on the job	45.2	1.4 : 1	6.3	6.2 : 1
Have taken a drink first thing in the morning	17.5	2.0 : 1	4.9	24.0 : 1
Have been ashamed of something done while drinking	41.0	1.1 : 1	8.1	1.9 : 1

proportions were almost equal.

(vii) Drinking-Related Difficulties at Work, School, with Police and Family

Estimates of drinking-related difficulties were much larger using the informant method than the survey method (Table 16). With the informant method, twice as many persons had at some time difficulties with the police or other authorities due to drinking, almost 3 times as many were reported to have had difficulties at work, concern expressed by family or friends over drinking was reported for 4 times as many, and 7 times as many were reported to have had difficulties at school. Differences between the sexes were smaller in the informant study.

(viii) Community Attitudes Toward Alcohol Abuse

There was little variation between the two studies in the reported concern of the public about alcohol problems within the community. Most people would agree that some course of action should be taken to help alcohol abusers and their families.

Summary

Compared with the standard survey method, the informant method resulted in a higher frequency of drinking, particularly among women, and a larger volume of consumption. Heavier alcohol use, as evidenced by rates of slight intoxication, problem and dependency symptoms, and drinking-related difficulties, was found to be more prevalent in the informant study. Sex differences in drinking patterns were much smaller in the informant study than in the survey study.

The informant results indicated more drinking outside the context of the home, and greater importance attributed to reasons for drinking or abstaining

TABLE 16

COMPARISON OF ESTIMATES OF DRINKING-RELATED DIFFICULTIES BY INFORMANT STUDY WITH SURVEY STUDY

DRINKING-RELATED DIFFICULTIES "EVER" EXPERIENCED	INFORMANT STUDY		SURVEY STUDY	
	% OF POPULATION REPORTING DIFFICULTY	MALE:FEMALE RATIO	% OF POPULATION REPORTING DIFFICULTY	MALE:FEMALE RATIO
Difficulties at work (e.g. being told off, lost pay, threatened with job loss, lost job, other)	16.7	1.8 : 1	5.7	8.7 : 1
Difficulties at school (e.g. being suspended, expelled, other)	8.8	1.6 : 1	1.3	1.6 : 1
Difficulties with police or other authorities (e.g. driving, public drunkenness, fighting, other)	18.6	2.3 : 1	9.0	9.1 : 1
Concern by family, relatives, friends or other acquaintances over drinking	36.9	1.2 : 1	8.9	3.0 : 1

than did those in the survey study. Community attitudes toward alcohol abuse were similar in both studies.

2. Comparisons of Per Adult Consumption Estimates Obtained by the Informant and Survey Methods with Alcohol Sales Data

The mean daily volume of consumption and frequency of drinking data, derived from the informant and household survey studies, and 1977 population figures for persons 15 years of age or older in the Regional Municipality of Durham⁵ were used to estimate per adult consumption for the Durham Region. These estimates, in turn, were compared with per adult (15 years or older) consumption in the region surrounding Toronto, which included Durham in addition to three other counties, based on alcohol sales data for 1976 (Single and Giesbrecht, 1978). Although not an ideal comparison, this seems to be the best available.

Estimates of per adult consumption were calculated in two ways: from male and female data, controlling for sex differences in volume and frequency of drinking and proportional variation in census statistics; and from overall data. The results were as follows:

- (i) taking into account sex differences, the average yearly volume of consumption per adult was estimated as 8.26 litres absolute alcohol from the informant data, and as 3.94 litres absolute alcohol from the survey data;
- (ii) on the other hand, using the overall mean daily volume and

5 Statistics from Table 2.4 in Ontario Statistics, 1978, Ministry of Treasury and Economics, Government of Ontario.

frequency of consumption, the consumption rate per adult was estimated as 7.68 litres absolute alcohol from the informant data, and 3.65 litres absolute alcohol from the survey data.

By comparing these estimates with that based on alcohol sales data for the region surrounding Toronto in 1976 (i.e. 10.23 litres absolute alcohol per person 15 years or older), it was found that the informant study accounted for a larger proportion of alcohol sold than did the survey study: the informant study accounted for 75%-81% of the sales data compared with 36%-39% by the survey study. Of course these are only gross comparisons in that the consumption rate estimated by the informant data was based on 1977 population figures, but 1978 drinking patterns; however, consumption rates for the Province as a whole increased by only approximately 1% between 1977 and 1978,⁶ therefore it is unlikely that drinking patterns in 1978 were substantially different from those in 1977. However, there were two additional sources of bias in the calculations: the consumption rate based on sales data was calculated from 1976 data and represented the area surrounding Toronto which included not only Durham but three other counties; and the population figures used in the calculation for both the informant and survey studies included persons age 15-17 years whereas drinking patterns were reported only for those aged 18 years or older.

Despite these shortcomings, the informant method was capable of generating reliable estimates of consumption patterns, and accounted for a larger proportion of alcohol purchases than did the standard survey.

6 Information provided by the Statistical Information Section, ARF.

3. Costs of the Informant Study: Comparison with Survey Study

Overall, the costs of the Durham informant study were approximately 20% of those of the household survey. Major savings were realized in the areas of materials and printing (e.g. questionnaires), personnel, selection and training, data processing and report writing. The informant study did entail additional costs for the rental of facilities for leader training sessions and some discussion groups.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

1. Meaning and Implications of Results

Drinking patterns differed according to sex and occupation. Men drank more frequently and larger amounts, on the average, than women. The farming group demonstrated the strictest drinking habits; drinking was infrequent, consumption volume was low, and rates of slight intoxication were small. One respondent adequately described the relatively moderate use of alcohol among farmers with the following comment "at conventions and fairs the liquor vendors depend on outsiders to buy (alcoholic beverages) because if they relied on us they'd be out of business!". On the other hand, the industrial/trade group represented the heaviest consumers and the highest rate of slight intoxication.

Overall, the results indicated that 20% of the adult population consume 10 cl. absolute alcohol on an average drinking day, 33% drink as often as three times a week, and 5% of men get slightly intoxicated almost daily; all of which represent larger proportions than those found in the household survey of the same region. Furthermore, the prevalence of particular problem and dependency symptoms of alcohol abuse and drinking-related difficulties was greater in the informant study than the survey study. Part of this discrepancy may be attributed to informants in the former study selectively estimating prevalence rates for only drinkers rather than for all adults. These comparisons suggest, however, that the informant method is more sensitive to alcohol use and abuse and is more successful in describing the drinking patterns of heavy consumers than the standard survey method. Comparisons of per adult consumption rates estimated by the informant method with regional sales data substantiate

the use of informants for collecting reliable data; up to 80% of alcoholic beverages purchased were accounted for by the informant study, compared with approximately 40% in the household survey.

The use of alcohol was generally found to be connected with social and recreational occasions rather than integrated with everyday activities. Drinking was not usually incorporated with daily meals; however, most people would reportedly have a drink with dinner at least once a week and the majority did not regularly drink separate from eating occasions. Alcohol use in both instances was more typical of men than women. Furthermore, the conduct of such activities as business or club meetings, or meeting for conversation was separate from the public drinking place. That drinking was usually associated with social interaction was evidenced by the customs of keeping a supply of alcoholic beverages in the home and offering a drink to visitors, and the expectation that a successful party would include drinking. Drinking was usually done in a home setting rather than in a public place, particularly among women and housewives. Alcohol consumption at sporting events was common, especially subsequent to the event. It was reported that many such recreational events take place in licensed facilities, so it is likely that drinking in such circumstances is not indicative of drinking in public but rather in the context of a social or sports club. In general, the use of alcohol on more structured social occasions was less typical of women and farmers.

Drinking customs promoting heavy consumption were not widespread. The practice of buying rounds or drinking to someone's health was not typical of most people and most men did not usually separate themselves from women for the purposes of drinking, although this was more common among the industrial/trade

group which also represented the smallest proportion of women. This would suggest that all-male drinking occasions are more common among occupations in which few women are found.

Attitudes toward drinking and drunkenness were generally conservative but not inflexible. Drinking was usually initiated with friends without parental approval. Moderate consumption was accepted by most people, but excessive drinking, particularly on a regular basis, was tolerated by few and the cause for ostracism in some cases. Heavy drinking was not generally regarded as a matter of prestige. However, bonds of friendship and disposition while intoxicated were factors influencing tolerance of heavy drinking; and there were many occasions when more drinking than usual was condoned.

Many reasons for drinking were considered important; namely, to be more sociable and to cope with anxiety or personal problems. Similarly, there were several important reasons for abstaining or modifying drinking habits, most notably having an alcoholic spouse and for health considerations. In general, women were more disapproving of drinking and drunkenness than men.

2. Advantages of the Informant Method

One of the foremost advantages of the informant method is the ability to provide useful and interesting information about drinking habits with a minimum of cost and effort. Furthermore, the method is adaptable to a variety of countries with very different populations and drinking customs (Smart et al., 1980). The relative ease of implementing the method and the little demand made of the investigators and participants makes the method attractive to use in developing countries.

The main advantages of the method are the following:

(i) Relative Ease of Sampling

Detailed house-by-house census information is not needed to establish the proportions of groups from different social classes. Investigators can use information available about the relative proportions of various occupational groups within the population to be studied.

(ii) Ease of Data Gathering

Groups are generally not difficult to assemble. In the Durham study, most of the participants reported that they enjoyed the experience. The method does not require experienced interviewers, and leaders can be trained in a few hours. Furthermore, a discussion group is usually completed in 2½ hours. Because responses to the questionnaire represent group consensus, the rate of non-response to individual items should be reduced.

(iii) Low Cost

Similar information about drinking habits is obtained from the informant method for approximately one-fifth the expense of household survey methods. In addition to lower costs, the informant method can be completed in relatively less time. Trials of the method average only a few months for completion. Furthermore, personnel required is reduced considerably from that for a household survey in that once a leader has been trained, he/she can lead several discussion groups and also recruit members. Leaders are responsible for chairing the discussion group, filling out the questionnaires, and in most cases, recruiting participants, all for a small honorarium.

(iv) Ease of Data Handling

The amount of data obtained from the informant method is small enough

to allow for manual tabulations directly from the questionnaires, which also makes the method attractive to countries or institutions which do not have access to a computer system or the personnel required to utilize it. The data can be handled easily using coding and card punching procedures, and calculations can be readily derived from either a hand sorter or an electric IBM sorter.

(v) Improved Estimates of Alcohol Consumption

Comparisons of the informant and survey methods with sales data show that the informant method is quite capable of generating reliable data and provides a much better estimate of per capita consumption than does the household survey. In fact, the informant method accounts for about 80% of the amounts sold whereas the survey method accounts for less than 40%. The improved estimate is most likely attributed to having participants report on drinking in their occupational group rather than on their own drinking.

(vi) Community Development Potential

The informant method requires that investigators make considerable contact with community leaders, group leaders and participants. It requires them to explain the aims of the study and to gain co-operation in a research project in a manner not required in other types of research. This should create opportunities for the organization sponsoring the study to become better known and to facilitate other types of co-operation. The method should be useful in studying a variety of social and health problems whose study is hindered by their sensitive nature, for example, sanitation, delinquency or child-rearing practices. By asking participants to describe the habits and customs of their occupational class rather than those of their own, a better understanding of the extent and nature of such problems should be achieved.

3. Disadvantages of the Informant Method

Despite the clear advantages of the informant method, it certainly has some problems and difficulties. The method requires interested and dedicated investigators who are willing to take time in the evenings and on week-ends to talk to group leaders and to supervise the group discussions. In rural areas, particularly in developing countries, it will be necessary to schedule groups for farmers and farm workers early in the morning or possibly in the fields at lunch-time. In this sense the method demands a flexible approach to the population under study, but can be adapted to almost any type of urban or rural setting. Also, in some rural areas it will be necessary for investigators to take time to become acquainted with the community and to become known and trusted by residents, as demonstrated in the trial of the method in Honduras during which there existed some suspicion that the investigators were from the tax department.

The method has drawbacks as a useful tool for case-finding, or for identifying problem drinkers or alcoholics who could be more intensively studied. In general, the method is useful in studying patterns of drinking and customs pertaining to alcohol use. However, its use as a method for studying alcoholism has yet to be demonstrated.

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APPENDIX A

DURHAM INFORMANT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE



PROJECT #252

DURHAM REGION SURVEY OF DRINKING CUSTOMS

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION:

GROUP #: _____

OCCUPATIONS OF GROUP MEMBERS:

1. (Leader) _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

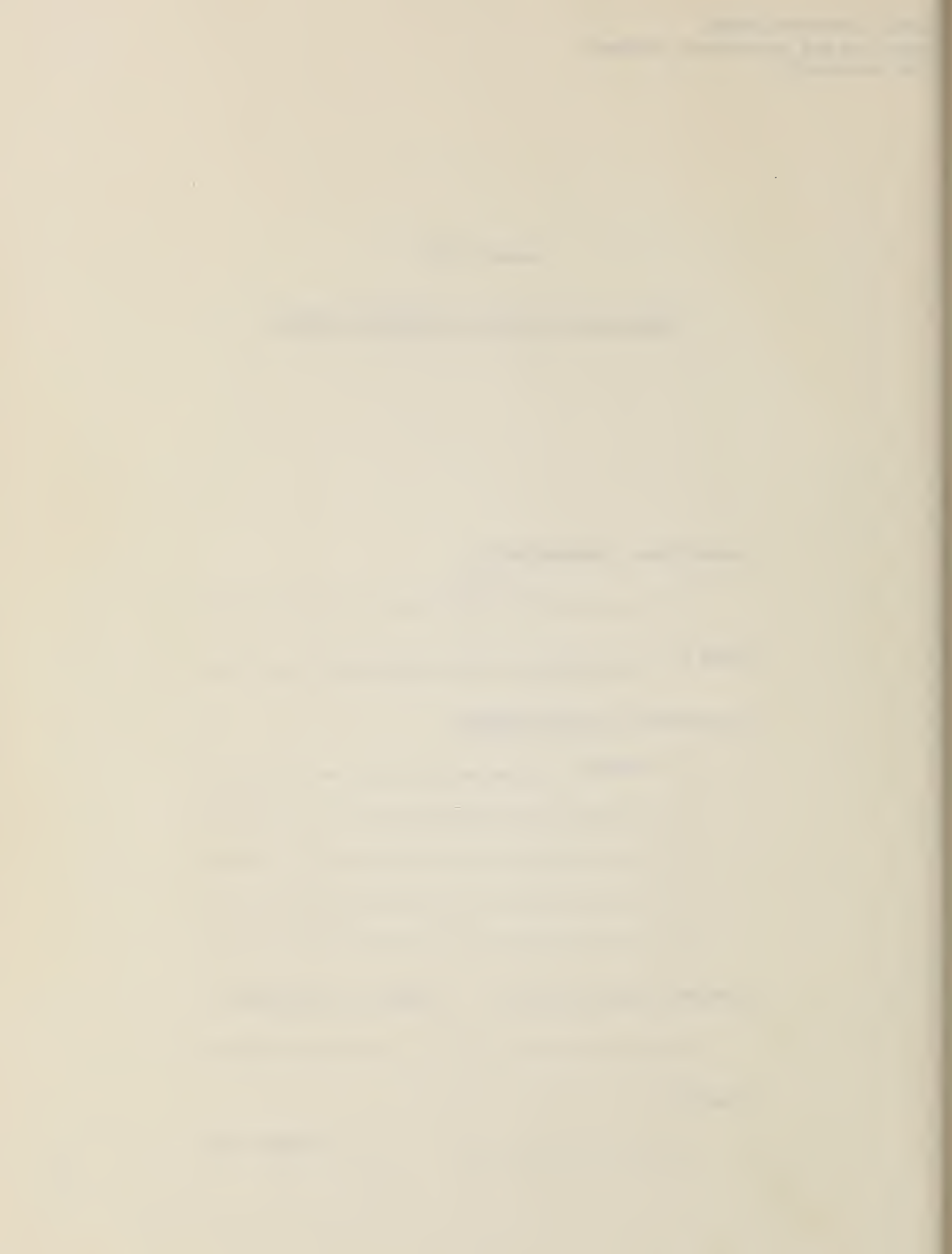
5. _____

COMPLETION DATE AND TIME:

LENGTH OF COMPLETION:

LOCATION:

OCTOBER 1979



1. Do most men start drinking alcoholic beverages:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. in the family (at home)
- b. with friends, with the consent of parents
- c. with friends, without the consent of parents
- d. during military service
- e. when they start to work

2. Do most women start drinking alcoholic beverages:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. in the family (at home)
- b. with friends, with the consent of parents
- c. with friends, without the consent of parents
- d. after they get married
- e. what they start to work

3. Do most men drink alcoholic beverages with their breakfast?

WRITE THE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH BEVERAGE

- | | <u>Wine</u> | <u>Beer,
Hard Cider</u> | <u>Other Alcoholic
Beverages</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. almost daily | | | |
| b. 2 or 3 times a week | | | |
| c. once a week | | | |
| d. once every 3 months | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| e. never | | | |
| f. under special circumstances | | | |

4. Do most men drink alcoholic beverages with lunch?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH BEVERAGE

- | | <u>Wine</u> | <u>Beer,
Hard Cider</u> | <u>Other Alcoholic
Beverages</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. almost daily | | | |
| b. 2 or 3 times a week | | | |
| c. once a week | | | |
| d. once every 3 months | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| e. never | | | |
| f. under special circumstances | | | |

5. Do most men drink alcoholic beverages with dinner?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH BEVERAGE

	<u>Wine</u>	<u>Beer, Hard Cider</u>	<u>Other Alcoholic Beverages</u>
a. almost daily			
b. 2 or 3 times per week			
c. once a week			
d. once every 3 months	_____	_____	_____
e. never			
f. under special circumstances			

6. Do most women drink alcoholic beverages with breakfast?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH BEVERAGE

	<u>Wine</u>	<u>Beer, Hard Cider</u>	<u>Other Alcoholic Beverages</u>
a. almost daily			
b. 2 or 3 times per week			
c. once a week			
d. once every 3 months	_____	_____	_____
e. never			
f. under special circumstances			

7. Do most women drink alcoholic beverages with lunch?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH BEVERAGE

	<u>Wine</u>	<u>Beer, Hard Cider</u>	<u>Other Alcoholic Beverages</u>
a. almost daily			
b. 2 or 3 times per week			
c. once a week			
d. once every 3 months	_____	_____	_____
e. never			
f. under special circumstances			

8. Do most women drink alcoholic beverages with dinner?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH BEVERAGE

	<u>Wine</u>	<u>Beer, Hard Cider</u>	<u>Other Alcoholic Beverages</u>
a. almost daily			
b. 2 or 3 times per week			
c. once a week			
d. once every 3 months	_____	_____	_____
e. never			
f. under special circumstances			

9. Do most men drink alcoholic beverages outside of meals?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. as a rule
- b. often
- c. rarely
- d. never

10. Do most women drink alcoholic beverages outside of meals?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. as a rule
- b. often
- c. rarely
- d. never

11. Do men drink distilled spirits (whisky, cocktails, aperitives, etc.) immediately before meals?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH PART OF QUESTION

	<u>As a Rule</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>
a. almost all		
b. a large minority		
c. a small minority		
d. only a few	_____	_____
e. none		

12. Do women drink distilled spirits (whisky, cocktails, aperitives, etc.) immediately before meals?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH PART OF QUESTION

- | | <u>As a Rule</u> | <u>Occasionally</u> |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| a. almost all | | |
| b. a large minority | | |
| c. a small minority | | |
| d. only a few | _____ | _____ |
| e. none | | |

13. In your opinion, what percentage of men do most of their drinking:

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| a. at home (alone or with friends) | _____ | % |
| b. in bars/taverns (where no meals are served) | _____ | % |
| c. in restaurants | _____ | % |
| d. in friends' or relatives' homes | _____ | % |
| e. in social/sports clubs | _____ | % |
| f. some other place | _____ | % |
| | _____ | 100 % |

14. In your opinion, what percentage of women do most of their drinking:

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| a. at home (alone or with friends) | _____ | % |
| b. in bars/taverns (where no meals are served) | _____ | % |
| c. in restaurants | _____ | % |
| d. in friends' or relatives' homes | _____ | % |
| e. in social/sports clubs | _____ | % |
| f. some other place | _____ | % |
| | _____ | 100 % |

15. Are alcoholic beverages sometimes used in the same way as non-alcoholic beverages, such as lemonade in the summertime?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. no
- b. yes (SPECIFY) _____
- _____

16. Do men segregate themselves from women for the purpose of drinking?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. yes
- b. no

17. Is offering a drink to a visitor customary with:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. most people
- b. a large minority
- c. only a few

18. For a woman to offer a drink to a female visitor is customary:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. only if there are also men present
- b. regardless whether or not men are present
- c. never

19. Whenever there is a party where no alcoholic beverages are offered, is this party considered to be a failure?

WRITE CORRESPONDING LETTER OF ANSWER UNDER EACH SEX

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|
| | <u>Men</u> | <u>Women</u> |
| a. by most | | |
| b. by a large minority | | |
| c. by a small minority | _____ | _____ |
| d. by very few | | |

20. Are business meetings arranged in public drinking places?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. by most people
- b. by a large minority
- c. by a small minority
- d. by hardly anybody
- e. by nobody

21. Is it customary for people to drink during sporting events?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF QUESTION

a. spectators	yes	no
b. participants	yes	no

22. Is it customary to drink alcoholic beverages after a sporting event to celebrate a victory or to make more bearable a defeat?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF QUESTION

a. spectators	yes	no
b. participants	yes	no

23. Do sports clubs meet in public drinking places?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. most of them
- b. a large minority
- c. a small minority
- d. hardly any
- e. none

24. Does one meet regularly for conversation in public drinking places?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. most people
- b. a large minority
- c. a small minority
- d. hardly anybody
- e. nobody

25. Is it customary to drink to someone's health?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. with most people
- b. with a large minority
- c. with a small minority
- d. with only a few people

26. Is it customary to buy rounds?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. with most people
- b. with a large minority
- c. with a small minority
- d. with only a few people

27. Is it customary to keep a supply of alcoholic beverages in the home?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. with most people
- b. with a large minority
- c. with a small minority
- d. with only a few people

28. In general, do men regard moderate consumption of alcohol by women with:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. approval
- b. indifference
- c. disapproval

29. In general, do women regard moderate consumption of alcohol by men with:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. approval
- b. indifference
- c. disapproval

30. In general, do women regard moderate consumption of alcohol by other women with:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. approval
- b. indifference
- c. disapproval

31. What relative importance would you attribute to the following reasons for the drinking of alcoholic beverages?

INDICATE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE WITH A (✓) FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
a. like smell or taste of alcohol	_____	_____	_____
b. parents drank/drink	_____	_____	_____
c. friends and/or relatives drink	_____	_____	_____
d. personal problems	_____	_____	_____
e. to relax, to be more sociable	_____	_____	_____
f. to overcome fatigue, nervous tension	_____	_____	_____
g. to make work easier	_____	_____	_____
h. to stimulate the mind	_____	_____	_____
i. because it is a habit	_____	_____	_____
j. any other reason	_____	_____	_____

32. Do most users of alcoholic beverages:

SELECT SOME OR ALL OF ANSWERS

- a. attribute food value to alcohol
- b. believe that it is beneficial to one's health
- c. believe that it has specific medicinal properties

33. When does one consider a man to be drunk?

SELECT SOME OR ALL OF ANSWERS

- a. when he drank too much (give quantity and type of beverage) _____
 - b. when he becomes very talkative
 - c. when his face becomes flushed
 - d. when his speech becomes slurred
 - e. when he makes unfitting remarks in the presence of women
 - f. when he becomes sexually aggressive
 - g. when he becomes uncertain on his feet
 - h. when he becomes argumentative
 - i. when he gets sick
 - j. if other criteria (signs) are used, please describe them
-
-

34. When does one consider a woman to be drunk?

SELECT SOME OR ALL OF ANSWERS

- a. when she drank too much (give quantity and type of beverage) _____
 - b. when she becomes very talkative
 - c. when her face becomes flushed
 - d. when her behaviour becomes obtrusive towards men
 - e. when she makes amorous advances
 - f. when she becomes uncertain on her feet
 - g. when she gets sick
 - h. if other criteria (signs) are used, please describe them _____
- _____
- _____

35. Do most men and **most** women regard the ability to consume large quantities of alcoholic beverages as a matter of prestige?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH SEX

- | | | |
|-------------|-----|----|
| a. by men | yes | no |
| b. by women | yes | no |

36. Is heavy drinking a reason for refusing a proposal of marriage (heavy drinking does not imply alcoholism and irresponsibility)?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF QUESTION

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|----|
| a. for most parents of a girl | yes | no |
| b. for most girls | yes | no |

37. If it is known that he/she gets easily intoxicated at parties, is this made known so that he or she won't be invited again in the case of:

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF QUESTION

- | | | |
|----------|-----|----|
| a. men | yes | no |
| b. women | yes | no |

38. Do most men/women avoid the company of a man who:

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF QUESTION

	<u>Women</u>		<u>Men</u>	
	yes	no	yes	no
a. gets drunk once or twice a week				
b. gets drunk on weekends				
c. gets drunk once a month				

39. In your opinion, what percentage of the male population:

a. gets slightly intoxicated almost every day	_____	%
b. gets slightly intoxicated 3 or 4 times a week	_____	%
c. gets slightly intoxicated 1 or 2 times a week	_____	%
d. gets slightly intoxicated 2 or 3 times a month	_____	%
e. gets slightly intoxicated about once a month	_____	%
f. gets slightly intoxicated a couple of times a year	_____	%
g. never gets slightly intoxicated	_____	%
	100	%

40. Do most women consider a single instance of drunkenness in men:

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. natural and acceptable
- b. undesirable, but something one has to tolerate
- c. completely intolerable

41. Is heavy drinking generally connected with playing games in public drinking places (billiards, cards, etc.)?

SELECT ONE ANSWER

- a. frequently
- b. in some instances
- c. rarely

42. Are there occasions when more drinking than usual is condoned?

SELECT SOME OR ALL OF ANSWERS

- a. none
- b. national festivals
- c. church festivals
- d. other events, such as weddings, christenings, consecrations, funerals
- e. other events (SPECIFY) _____

43. What relative importance would you attribute to the following reasons for abstaining or being careful about drinking?

INDICATE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE WITH A (✓) FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
a. religious reasons	_____	_____	_____
b. health reasons	_____	_____	_____
c. financial reasons	_____	_____	_____
d. dislike of the taste/smell of alcohol	_____	_____	_____
e. fear of the consequences	_____	_____	_____
f. parents never drank	_____	_____	_____
g. father was an alcoholic	_____	_____	_____
h. mother was an alcoholic	_____	_____	_____
i. husband/wife is/was an alcoholic	_____	_____	_____
j. other reasons	_____	_____	_____

44. What are the most frequent reasons for drinking only in rare instances (e.g. small quantities one to four times a year)?

DESIGNATE "1" MOST FREQUENT REASON, "2" NEXT MOST FREQUENT REASON, ETC.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| a. moral reasons | _____ |
| b. health reasons | _____ |
| c. financial reasons | _____ |
| d. dislike of the taste | _____ |
| e. fear of the consequences | _____ |

45. In your opinion, what percentage of men during the past year:

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| a. consumed alcohol 3 to 4 times a week or more
(e.g. up to daily) | _____ % |
| b. consumed alcohol once a month or more
(e.g. up to once or twice a week) | _____ % |
| c. consumed alcohol less than once a month
but at least once a year | _____ % |
| d. consumed alcohol less than once a year
or never drinks alcohol | _____ % |
| | <u>100</u> % |

46. In your opinion, what percentage of women during the past year:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| a. consumed alcohol 3 to 4 times a week or more
(e.g. up to daily) | _____ % |
| b. consumed alcohol once a month or more
(e.g. up to once or twice a week) | _____ % |
| c. consumed alcohol less than once a month
but at least once a year | _____ % |
| d. consumed alcohol less than once a year
or never drinks alcohol | _____ % |
| | <hr/> 100 % |

47. In your opinion, how much beer and/or wine and/or liquor would most men drink (those men who drink at least once a month) on an average drinking day within the past year?

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. beer and/or | _____ ounces |
| b. wine and/or | _____ ounces |
| c. liquor | _____ ounces |

48. In your opinion, how much beer and/or wine and/or liquor would most women drink (those women who drink at least once a month) on an average drinking day within the past year?

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. beer and/or | _____ ounces |
| b. wine and/or | _____ ounces |
| c. liquor | _____ ounces |

49. The following is a list of experiences that many people report in connection with their drinking. In your opinion, what percentage of men and women have had each of these experiences within the past year?

- | | <u>Men</u> | | <u>Women</u> |
|--|------------|--|--------------|
| a. felt that drinking should be cut down
or stopped altogether | _____ % | | _____ % |
| b. awakened the next day not being able
to remember some of the things done
while drinking | _____ % | | _____ % |
| c. felt the effects of alcohol while on the
job | _____ % | | _____ % |
| d. have taken a drink first thing in the
morning | _____ % | | _____ % |
| e. have been ashamed of something they did
while drinking | _____ % | | _____ % |

50. In your opinion, what percentage of men and women have ever had the following difficulties caused by their drinking?

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
a. difficulties at work (e.g. been told off, lost pay, been threatened with loss of job, lost job, other)	_____ %	_____ %
b. difficulties at school (e.g. been suspended from school, expelled from school, other)	_____ %	_____ %
c. difficulties with the police or other authorities (e.g. driving, public drunkenness, fighting, other)	_____ %	_____ %
d. concern by family, relatives, friends, or acquaintances over drinking	_____ %	_____ %

51. In the neighbourhood, if a man beats his wife/partner while he is drunk, how would most men and women in the neighbourhood think?

- a. nothing should be done about it GO TO Q. 52
 b. something should be done about it



Who should do something about it?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

a. wife/partner	yes	no
b. neighbour	yes	no
c. relative of hers	yes	no
d. relative of his	yes	no
e. civil authority (police)	yes	no
f. religious authority	yes	no
g. social service agency	yes	no
h. anyone who knows about it	yes	no
i. other (SPECIFY) _____	yes	no

52. In the neighbourhood if a man drinks so much that he falls down on the ground and cannot get up, how would most men and women in the neighbourhood think?

- a. nothing should be done about it GO TO Q. 53
 b. something should be done about it CONTINUE TOP OF NEXT PAGE

52. Who should do something about it?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| a. neighbour | yes | no |
| b. relative/family | yes | no |
| c. civil authority (police) | yes | no |
| d. religious authority | yes | no |
| e. social service agency | yes | no |
| f. anyone who knows about it | yes | no |
| g. other (SPECIFY) _____ | yes | no |

53. In the neighbourhood, if a person spends so much on drinking that there is not enough food for the family, how would most men and women in the neighbourhood think?

- a. nothing should be done about it GO TO Q. 54
b. something should be done about it

↓

Who should do something about it?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| a. neighbour | yes | no |
| b. relative/family | yes | no |
| c. civil authority (police) | yes | no |
| d. religious authority | yes | no |
| e. social service agency | yes | no |
| f. anyone who knows about it | yes | no |
| g. other (SPECIFY) _____ | yes | no |

54. In the neighbourhood if a woman in a public place has drunk so much that she cannot walk well, how would most men and women in the neighbourhood think?

- a. nothing should be done about it GO TO Q. 55
b. something should be done about it

↓

Who should do something about it?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| a. her husband/partner | yes | no |
| b. relatives/family | yes | no |
| c. civil authority (police) | yes | no |
| d. religious authority | yes | no |
| e. social service agency | yes | no |
| f. anyone who knows about it | yes | no |
| g. other (SPECIFY) _____ | yes | no |

55. In the neighbourhood, if a bus driver appears to have been drinking before driving, how would most men and women in the neighbourhood think?

- a. nothing should be done about it GO TO Q. 56
b. something should be done about it



Who should do something about it?

UNDERLINE "YES" OR "NO" FOR EACH PART OF THE QUESTION

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| a. passengers | yes | no |
| b. police | yes | no |
| c. anyone who knows about it | yes | no |
| d. other (SPECIFY) _____ | yes | no |

56. In your opinion, what percentage of men and women have ever tried the following drugs?

- | | <u>Men</u> | % | <u>Women</u> | % |
|--|------------|---|--------------|---|
| a. cannabis (which is sometimes called marihuana, hashish, pot) | _____ | % | _____ | % |
| b. hallucinogens (which may be called LSD peyote, mescaline, PCP, etc.) | _____ | % | _____ | % |
| c. amphetamines <u>without</u> the consent of a doctor or health worker (sometimes called speed, uppers, pep pills, diet pills, and include such drugs as Benzedrine, Dexedrine Ritalin, etc.) | _____ | % | _____ | % |

APPENDIX B

DURHAM INFORMANT STUDY PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

APPENDIX B

DURHAM STUDY PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

The undersigned agrees to participate in a project of the Addiction Research Foundation to study drinking practices in different occupational groups. There is to be one meeting lasting 1 to 2 hours where drinking habits of those in my occupational group will be discussed. My own drinking habits are not being discussed. The study will help to establish whether methods of the type used here are useful. There is to be payment for my involvement in this study and no other direct benefit, and I understand that I can withdraw from it at any time.

Individual responses will be confidential. The group sessions will not be recorded and group members will be asked not to talk about any individual's remarks during the session.

Name _____

Age _____

APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS

PROJECT #252

DURHAM REGION SURVEY OF DRINKING CUSTOMS

Instructions for Group Leaders

GENERAL COMMENTS:

All questions pertain solely to your region and occupational group. There are several types of questions included:

- (i) in instances in which you have to select one answer out of a series of possible answers, underline the one chosen (an example is question #1);
- (ii) in instances in which you may select some or all of the possible answers, underline the ones you have chosen (an example is question #33);
- (iii) in some cases a question may be composed of two or three parts and you are required to select an answer for each part. In these cases, record the corresponding letter (i.e., a, b, c, etc.) of the answer chosen under each part (an example is question #3);
- (iv) in instances in which you are required to make an estimate measured in percent, write the percentage opposite each answer (an example is question #13);
- (v) there are several questions specifying special instructions. Please read these carefully.

If none of the answers reflect your opinion, would you please write your answer in the left-hand margin of the questionnaire beside the question. Use this method only in exceptional cases.

You are requested not to give your personal opinion but only to indicate how the majority of the group perceives these matters.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES INCLUDE:

wine, beer, ciders with alcoholic content, aperitives and all distilled spirits.

HOUSEWIVES GROUPS:

A number of questions do not apply to this occupational group unless the women in the group know males who are housepersons.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

- 1-27 These refer to men and women (minority, people, etc.) in the same occupational classification as represented by the members in the discussion group.
- 1&2 Read out alternatives and select one answer.
- 1 Not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.

- Q.3-8 Read the question to initiate discussion. Then explain that frequency of consumption must be decided on for the three types of alcoholic beverages.
- Q.3,4 & 5 are not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.9 & 10 Read the question only to start discussion. Then ask the group which one alternative is the answer.
- Q.9 Not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.11 & 12 Read the question to stimulate discussion. Then give the alternatives which are to be chosen for the frequencies.
- Q.11 Not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.13 & 14 All the places are to be read out with the question. Then explain that we are after percentages for each place and that the percentages must eventually total 100%. Examples of "some other place" are provincial parks or conservation areas or the place of work.
- Q.13 Not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.15 If the answer to this question is "yes", then specify all the alcoholic beverages that your group feels are used in this way.
- Q.19 The group as a whole must answer how they think men of their occupational classification would feel and then how most women of their occupational classification would feel. The housewives' groups are not asked the part about men.
- Q.20 "public drinking places" would be hotel bars, pubs, or taverns or licensed restaurants.
- Q.21 & 22 The "participants" are non-professionals.. They are persons from the same occupational classification who are playing in softball leagues, bowling teams, etc.
- Q.28 The group as a whole must decide how men in their occupational classification regard the consumption of alcohol by women in their same occupational classification. This is not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.29 Not to be asked of housewives unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.29 & 30 Similar to Q. 28.
- Q.31-34 These questions refer to "users, man, woman" in the same occupational classification as represented by the members in the discussion group.
- Q.32 Read out all the possible answers for the question and then determine the group's response for the first answer, then the second and finally the third answer.

- Q.33 Ask the question and then state "I'm going to read you a number of signs which might indicate that a man is drunk. Let's try to decide "yes" or "no" for one item at a time".
- Q.34 Similar to Q. 33.
- Q.35 First, do most men in the same occupational classification as the group members regard the ability to consume large quantities of alcoholic beverages, as a matter of prestige? Select either "yes" or "no". Secondly, do most women in the same occupational classification as the group members regard the ability to consume large quantities of alcoholic beverages, as a matter of prestige? Select either "yes" or "no".
- Q.36 Is heavy drinking a reason for refusing a proposal of marriage for A) most parents with one parent being from the same occupational classification as the group, and B) most girls that you know.
- Q.37 If it is known that a male gets easily intoxicated at parties, is that made known so that he would not be invited again by people in your occupational classification. Select "yes" or "no". Similarly, for a female, select "yes" or "no".
- Q.38 Do most women, from the same occupational classification as the group avoid the company of a man who: Then, do most men, from the same occupational classification as the group, avoid the company of a man who: The second part of the question is not asked of the housewives groups unless they know male housepersons.
- Q.39 "The male population" is of the same occupational classification as the group.
- Q.40 The "women" are in the same occupational classification as the group.
- Q.41 - 50 These refer to men and women in the same occupational classification as group members.
- Q.47 A bottle of beer is 10 ounces.
A glass of wine is 3 ounces.
A drink of liquor is 1½ ounces.
- Q.51 - 55 These refer to the neighbourhood of men and women in the same occupational classification as the group members.
- Q.56 This refers to men and women in the same occupational classification as the group members.

IN CONCLUSION:

After the discussion group has departed there are a few items about which we need a little information:

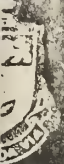
1. What was the general atmosphere of the group?
2. What problems arose in holding the group?
3. What other problems existed?
4. Were there drop-outs either immediately before, or during the group discussion?
5. What questionnaire items were vague or poorly understood?
6. What items promoted lengthy discussion?
7. What items failed to attain group consensus?

Please record this information on the back page of the questionnaire.

APPENDIX D

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT PRESENTED TO PARTICIPANTS





SURVEY RESEARCH CENTRE

TALK ABOUT DRINKING

The Survey Research Centre at York University is to conduct a survey in the Durham Region concerning public attitudes towards the use of alcohol. This study, sponsored by the Addiction Research Foundation, is especially interesting since it is one of three presently being conducted in the Western World, and is the first of it's kind to be done in Canada.

The objective of the study is to bring together persons from similar occupational groups to discuss questions concerning drinking and drinking habits amongst persons of comparable occupations. Small groups of people will meet to respond to a series of questions which will be resolved by discussion amongst group members. The consensus of opinion will then be recorded on the questionnaire provided by York. It is anticipated that the discussions will last approximately 1 1/2 hours and will take place outside participants' normal working hours.

Group members may be teetotallers, heavy drinkers, or anywhere in between, since individual drinking habits are never discussed - just those of the occupational group as a whole. All information gathered is confidential and participants names will not be divulged.

If you are a Durham Region resident, aged 18 years or over, and would like to take part in this unusual study, you are invited to contact Lynn Ferns, (the Toronto Area Supervisor for the Survey Research Centre at York University) at 576-5400.

THE HISTORY OF THE

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APPENDIX E

RECRUITING INSTRUCTIONS



SURVEY RESEARCH CENTRE

PROJECT #252

DURHAM REGION

This study is being conducted by York University on behalf of the Addiction Research Foundation. You may have heard some radio announcements, also sponsored by the A.R.F., to create public awareness of alcohol consumption.

The objective of this particular study is to bring together persons from similar occupational groups to discuss questions concerning drinking habits amongst persons of similar occupations.

Small groups will meet to respond to a series of questions and hopefully to reach a consensus on their answers. You, as group leader or chairman, will try to lead the group to agree to an answer which represents the group as a whole. You will record the answers on a questionnaire which will be provided.

Information gathered will be kept confidential and participants names will not be divulged.

Recruiting Instructions

- 1) You must recruit six (6) _____, who are currently employed, from
Occupational Group # _____.
- 2) Try to select group members from different age categories. (Minimum age is 18 years)
- 3) Only one person per family may participate.
- 4) Participants must live in the Durham Region (but need not necessarily be employed within the Region).
- 5) It is not necessary that participants be persons who drink alcohol; participants may be teetotalers, heavy drinkers - or anywhere in between. (Remember: the group does not discuss individual drinking habits etc. but considers their occupational group as a whole).

- 6) Members of your group will be paid \$ _____ for taking part in the discussion.
- 7) Ascertain which day of the week everyone can attend, and indicate whether morning, afternoon or evening is most suitable. As far as is possible, groups will be scheduled at times convenient for those attending, so I must have this information as soon as possible.
- 8) You will be recruiting 6 persons for your group but only 4 of these persons will actually be participating with you. Over recruiting is necessary in case of illness or family emergencies. All persons who are recruited will be paid when they come to the discussion group but in the event of too many persons arriving, those recruited last will not participate.
- 9) Be sure to stress that all information given is kept strictly confidential and that participants' names are never released. Informed consent forms will be supplied.
- 10) If you know of someone who would like to participate but is in the wrong occupational group or is of the "wrong" sex, please let me have his/her name and phone number.



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Liban, Carolyn B.
The value of the informant
method for studying drinking
habits

BioMed.

